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Miller (John)

# Things after Death.

THREE CHAPTERS

ON THE

INTERMEDIATE STATE;

WITH

THOUGHTS ON

Family Burial Places;

AND

HINTS FOR EPITAPHS

IN COUNTRY CHURCHYARDS.

Ay, but to die, and go we know not where!

London:

FRANCIS & JOHN RIVINGTON,  
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1848.



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## Preface.

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It is earnestly hoped that no reader who shall open this book may be led, by the motto in its title-page, to look for any manner of encouragement either to scepticism or doubtful disputation on its very solemn principal subject. Doubtless that motto has a startling sound; and it has been inserted partly on that very account, for greater chance of quickening attention. Its utterance, though only through the mouth of an imaginary character, by so great a master of the human mind, at once establishes its deep connexion with man's nature; and the subject is obviously one, on which it may suit the condition or desire of many minds to seek the shelter (such as it may

be) of doubt or indistinctness. But no encouragement to this is here intended. Upon the contrary, it is with an express desire to give a definite and safe answer to dangerous or froward questionings, that these few uncontroversial pages are put forth. *If* such an answer be in HOLY SCRIPTURE, the point is settled in all minds disposed to humble and implicit faith in that Divine word. The writer of these pages thinks it *is* there—provided Scripture be interpreted by primitive belief, and by a due consideration of the necessities of the case. He thinks, moreover, that a simple manual upon the subject, designedly kept free from waverings and balancings of men's opinions, and looking only to the one unerring authority, is much wanted. His reasons for so thinking will unfold themselves in his successive chapters. So far from studying, or making pretence to any novelty in these, he wishes to avow that the middle chapter, which contains the selected Scriptural

authorities, is all but entirely taken from sermons of Bishop Bull and Dr. Townson. The setting of the jewels is all which can there claim any originality. As to the general question, the writer himself has held a judgment in abeyance perhaps too long, and he would rejoice to preserve others from a like suspense, for reasons which also will develop themselves in the third chapter.

It may be well to add—considering the strange propensity of men to run into extremes—that it is not by any means a thing to be desired, and much less is it recommended here, that a doctrine too much neglected should all at once have past neglect compensated by an unnecessary prominence. Only let Christian people have something like definite and settled faith upon the subject, and then let every one whom it concerns both read and teach after the manner of Holy Writ itself. That sovereign guide, it is conceived, never speaks *irreconcilably* with this doctrine, al-

though undoubtedly its ordinary form of expression is oftener directed to the day of great and final judgment to come, and the intermediate state silently taken for granted.

The *Hints for Epitaphs* will have an introduction of their own. Wherefore with these few notices, and with a reverent eye to the Divine blessing, the writer leaves his little book to find its own way; adapting, with a few slight alterations, some earnest and devout words of SOUTHEY, as the best expression of his feelings:—

Go, little book! *with no self-seeking view,*

I cast thee on the waters: go thy ways!

And if, as I believe, thy vein be *true,*

*Blessing may light on thee in course of days.*

Be it with thee according to thy worth:—

Go, little book! in faith I send thee forth.

## Contents.

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	Page
<b>THREE CHAPTERS ON THE INTERMEDIATE STATE :</b>	
I. Why the Doctrine of the Intermediate State is apt to be so much lost sight of	1
II. Scripture intimations of the Intermediate State . . . . .	21
III. Doctrine of the Intermediate State a special argument for well-doing . . .	41
<b>THOUGHTS ON FAMILY BURYING-PLACES . . .</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>HINTS FOR EPITAPHS IN COUNTRY CHURCHYARDS</b>	<b>85</b>



THREE CHAPTERS

ON

The Intermediate State.

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CHAPTER I.

WHY THE DOCTRINE OF THE INTERMEDIATE STATE IS  
APT TO BE SO MUCH LOST SIGHT OF.

LOOKING to the actual state of things in this Christian land, it must be universally admitted that, if it be desirable to see a whole community leading Christian lives, we cannot well *spare* any doctrine, fairly deducible from Holy Scripture, involving motives of a powerful tendency to bring forth fruits of good living. Yet there is such a doctrine, strangely neglected in comparison with its importance; namely, the doctrine of the intermediate (or middle)

state between death and the resurrection. It is intended in these chapters—after first briefly showing the necessity of such a state—to give some probable account of this neglect; to set in order some simple, reasonable proofs of the doctrine in question, gathered from Holy Scripture; and to describe its value and power as an argument for Christian living. In such proportion as these three points shall severally be made good, the duty and the wisdom will appear of paying an increased attention to a precious truth, too commonly received with either blameable indifference or blind alarm.

The striking incident of the repentant thief upon the cross, shall be the groundwork of an introductory proof that there *must be* an intermediate state.

“LORD (said he to the suffering Redeemer), remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And JESUS said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” If we simply believe this as a

real incident, we must at once admit—either that our LORD in these words conveyed a positive and sure promise of something that should actually be, or else we must be guilty of the blasphemy of judging that He spake in vain: in other terms, that He gave utterance to idle words, sounding like promise to the ear, but not intended to be carried into effect. This last alternative is out of the question, if only we believe in JESUS. The promise therefore is a real one. And much is gathered into these few words, “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Here is a time assigned—to-day; a place—paradise; and He who makes the promise says explicitly, that He will be Himself there. It is to be considered what all this implies, and renders necessary.

*How* was our LORD to be in paradise the day on which He was crucified—and how was this repentant and sincere believer to be with Him there? Most certainly, not in the body. For we have positive and most distinct know-

ledge of what was done with the *body* of JESUS. That was conveyed with care and honour into Joseph of Arimathea's tomb; laid safely in a sepulchre hewn out of the rock; and there secured by the rolling of a great stone to block the entrance. Nor only so, but still more did the enemies of CHRIST assist (though with an ill design) towards its safe keeping until the third day, by "sealing the stone and setting a watch." And though we neither have, nor do we need, any like exact record of what became of the two other crucified bodies; it may be looked upon as certain that they were treated in the ordinary way of dealing with bodies which had been allowed to be taken down from the cross. Whatever that way was, so—and so only—fared the *body* of the penitent thief. Yet he was also to be in paradise that day, with his Redeemer: how should this be? It could be only in the soul, or spirit. For man consists but of these two parts, "the reasonable soul and human flesh."

And since the flesh could not be there—and, in our LORD's own case, we are made certain that it was not there—it must have been the souls or spirits of each that met together in paradise.

But this is not by any means the whole of the case. The *words* of this same penitent's request are noticeable. His intreaty had been—LORD, remember me when thou comest into *thy kingdom*. To this our Saviour does not make reply to any like effect to what He had done upon a former occasion, in answering the rash request of the two sons of Zebedee, that they might sit upon the right hand and the left in *His kingdom*; but (as His manner is) He only reveals just so much as suited the occasion. The prayer of James and John called for reproof; but this entirely humble supplication of the penitent transgressor drew forth comfort. Without disclosing more than might serve well for this, touching the secrets of His kingdom, our LORD replies benignantly,

“To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise.” He shows Himself a present help in time of trouble. His kingdom, as we well know, is not yet come; and there may still be a long time to pass before it comes. All we are sure of is, that it will come; but not till after the great day of general resurrection. Judgment will follow that, and then the righteous will inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. To this we look; for this we pray; but when the time of it will be, is not declared or known.

Meanwhile, what will become of those whose spirits have found shelter in paradise? For so it must have been—in spirit, not in the body—that JESUS and the subject of His mercy entered there; and so alone can any have found entrance, of all those faithful souls which, “after having been delivered from the burthen of the flesh, are in joy and felicity.” What must be judged to be the lot of these?

Now here again we are not left without a

guiding clew. We are informed, through the plain record of the Scriptures, not only that CHRIST's body did not go into *the unseen state*, between His death and resurrection, but also that neither was his soul left there. In His case, that was most surely re-united to the body; for we are told that, "after His passion, He showed Himself alive to His Apostles by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days." What real change had passed upon His glorious body, to qualify it for ascension into heaven, is not explained; but it is obviously certain that the spirit had come back to it, and it revived; and it is plain enough withal, no outward change in it was visible to the mere natural eye, for the disciples knew it was THE LORD. If, too, it had not been the body in which He had suffered, how could St. Thomas have received the evidence which he required? "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my

hand into His side, I will not believe." But he saw, and did believe.

While CHRIST, however, thus was loosed, because it was not possible that He should be holden of death, none other has as yet obtained with Him a like return to life. And therefore must the soul that passed thus with Him into paradise, be still abiding there until the resurrection. That did not come back to its former tabernacle of the body, and it cannot perish :— where can it be, except in that same place of rest whither our LORD conveyed it? From whence it scarcely seems too much to say, that even were this all the testimony supplied to us to such effect, it might alone almost be held sufficient to establish the point. But it is very far indeed from being all, as will be shown in a succeeding chapter. What now remains of this will be assigned to showing certain reasons, for which it may be judged that this doctrine of the middle state is thrown so much into the back-ground, and not so often or so seriously

considered as it ought to be. A too general neglect of it is one sign among a thousand, that there are multitudes who never think in earnest what shall come after death at all. And it is very probably from want of more distinct notions upon a subject of such high interest, that many a powerful and weighty "reasoning of judgment to come," passes away from those who hear without profiting them. But more of this by-and-by. The present chapter has to look only to certain reasons as aforesaid; in doing which, it is not meant to speak in strictly philosophical or exact, but only in intelligible popular terms.

1. A first reason, then, of so much silence on the doctrine now in question, may very readily be found in its mysterious and *dim* character—in almost every point beyond the general and simple truth itself, that there must surely be, and is, an intermediate state.

Enough has been advanced already, to make it quite an easy thing to be convinced of this—

the simple general truth. Beyond such truth itself, however, all only leads to questioning about a world of which as yet we know nothing, neither can we know—the *world of spirits*. It is not difficult to comprehend the fact, that we have souls; meaning, a principle within us distinct and separable from the body, although so curiously mixed up with it, that no sagacity or wit of man can give precise account of it. But, while the wisest or most learned cannot do that, the simplest may sufficiently perceive and understand such things as these which follow;—namely, if they shall commune with themselves, “With *what* is it we think, or reason, or lay down plans of future actions, or forecast for probable consequences, or recollect the past, or do a thousand things in which—so far as can be traced—the bodily organs have no share? We do not any of these things with hands, or feet, or eyes, or ears, or touch, or taste, or smell. Our *senses* (as we call them) have no part herein. There

is a something else within us, which does us all these services; and when that something takes its flight, we die; the body sinks into a cold and lifeless mass, forthwith to generate corruption. All may sufficiently perceive, and own as much as this, how much soever wanting what is called learning.

Yet when we go on further, and, whether more or less learned, would try to think or guess how this same spirit that is now within us can live apart, without the body; and though the body dies when this departs, and cannot live without it, yet may this soul be living all the while elsewhere, and be awake to all that is passing around it—all turns at once to mystery and to obscurity. So to express it, we pass into a world of which we have no manner of experience. And hence the subject does not seem in any way *practical*. It looks as though men could be only puzzled or perplexed by hearing such things spoken of. Hence doubtless, for one cause, a general (and

to a great extent commendable and prudent) care is taken, not to confound the apprehensions of the simple by dwelling on these less defined, and as yet hidden things. This might alone account for very much of a prevailing silence upon such a subject. And certainly it might be wrong, to go beyond reminding Christian hearers of the main facts, or truths, which Scripture has disclosed about this middle state ; yet it would be more surely wrong still—looking to the whole counsel of God—never to stir the mind at all by way of remembrance, if it be so that a distinct notion of entering on this same state immediately after death may, by God's blessing, prove one of the most practical things imaginable ; one of the strongest motives for resisting sin, and a most powerful encouragement to Christian living.

2. A second likely ground of such silence may be, that some have chosen to dispute, or to confound the doctrine, as being one of not absolute certainty, and not of indispensable

necessity to be believed. These in effect set up a plea, that Scripture has said nothing positively on the subject ; and some, in consequence, choose to leave out of reckoning (as we may say) the term between a Christian's death and resurrection, as though it were an interval respecting which nothing is known so as to be maintained with confidence. A sleep (so to describe it) of the soul is thus imagined ; a state in which the dead remain without consciousness, till they shall be awakened by the last trump. Whence it is argued to be of no importance what the length of such deep sleep may be ; as in our natural sleep (it will be argued) all seems as one, whether we wake from shortest or from longest slumber. (Which illustration is at best but very questionably true, but that need not be dwelt upon.) And it is no hard thing to comprehend, how some may have been *thus* beguiled into a silence on the doctrine in question, seeing that no sincere and prudent Mi-

nister of JESUS CHRIST would ever choose, or dare, to urge upon his flock any mere words of doubtful disputation. Such will be naturally willing to speak more freely, and more frequently, of universally-admitted verities ; as, for example, those which, in a common-place expression, are called, "the four last things," meaning death, judgment, heaven, and hell. The intermediate state is thus again lost sight of ; such mode of overlooking it being by far more common than any calm and just enforcement of it upon the general hearer.

Of course the question, as to the reality of such a doctrine, must be determined by the Scriptures ; not here, however, nor any where, submitted to the whims or wilfulness of any man's mere private interpretation, but understood (as said before) consistently with primitive consent and the necessity of the case. If Holy Writ, interpreted by sound reason, does not declare the doctrine, it cannot be insisted on as of divine authority.

salvation ; but if it *does* contain it, and if we cannot in fair reason disallow that fact, then it must be at least hurtful to disregard all proper thought of such teaching, upon a subject of such solemn interest. To look what *is* the teaching of the Scriptures on this head, will be the subject of the next chapter. If that shall make its point good, the consequence is obvious ; and if it can be further shown to be a doctrine according to godliness, — leading, through all its lawful and becoming use, to greater reverence in thought and a more Christian carefulness of living, — must it not be at once both highly blameable and highly dangerous, not to allow its due and proper weight to its argument for taking heed unto our

all                      however, the chief  
ail                      so much silence  
on                      doctrine, is that  
its deep awful-  
art, from its abuse.

And vain it would be to deny that it is liable to perilous abuse, and that it has been grievously perverted. From its abuse have come some of the worst corruptions of the simplicity that is in CHRIST. The way, however, to contend rightly against corruptions of a doctrine that is wholesome when scripturally taught, is not to shrink from it, or rail at it, nor yet to close our eyes to its existence in the word of truth. That is but to deprive ourselves of so much healthful sustenance of the soul's life, and to give adversaries ground of boasting that they acknowledge more of Scripture truth than we, who boast to be reformed. But the right course to take is, to keep and to maintain the doctrine in its instructiveness and purity, giving no handle unto any to speak reproachfully against us, either upon the ground of neglecting Scripture, or on that of "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

Let it be granted to the fullest extent, that

it is awful, very awful, to think that, *instantly on death*, the soul, then separated from the body, passes at once into an eternal state of conscious happiness, or conscious misery. Upon the *pleasant* side, indeed, of this alternative, even the natural man makes no demur, since nothing can be more acceptable to all our longings ; but on the *painful* one, the view is fearful indeed ! So much so, that while some, unable to endure the thought, have gone astray to graft upon it most pernicious corruptions ; others appear scarce less desirous to put the doctrine, if not entirely out of sight, still as far off from them as possible ; each party seeking thus, although by opposite ways, the common end of softening its terrors. Thus have sprung up, on one hand, that most corrupt invention of Purgatory, with all its consequent delusions of buying pardons for the dead ; of which our XXII<sup>nd</sup> Article justly pronounces, that it is “a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather re-

pugnant to the word of God <sup>1</sup>;" while, on the other side, for any thing that many care to teach, Scripture might just as well have given us no clew at all upon the point of what shall follow death before the judgment comes. And people's recklessness of living has increased accordingly. One error finds its end in gross and perilous superstition; the other, in perhaps still worse indifference, or all but unbelief.

Meanwhile, the doctrine is at least *capable* of doing us the greatest good; capable, perhaps, beyond all other views, of keeping *some* in a more Christian fear, and so preserving them within the pale of righteousness. It cannot truly be described as clear of all difficulty, nor is it so explicitly set forth in Holy

<sup>1</sup> Just *so* contrary—let it be noted—that, were the doctrine of indulgences and pardons true, it would go far towards making the Gospel glad tidings to the *rich*, much more than to the *poor*. And can *that* be?

Writ as certain other doctrines are. But it will be for the following chapter to show whether it be there or not. And if a Christian's heart and reasonable judgment shall be alike convinced that *there it is*, he will know how to deal with it. If bent in earnest on salvation, he will not take offence at it, or slight it, merely because of men's perversions of a precious truth; nor will he cast such word of God behind him for its great solemnity. But, separating all abuses of it from its substantial truth and power, he will receive the doctrine thankfully, and strive to use it to his soul's welfare, according to his LORD's intention in revealing it, which can be only for His true disciples' happiness through all eternity.

In proceeding to examine Scripture proofs of this doctrine, let it be borne in mind, that no perverseness on man's part can alter or undo the truth of God. We cannot without danger suffer any distinction between less or greater doctrines, or between doctrines more or

less explicitly revealed, to persuade us that it can be a light thing to treat with disregard such indications of His mind and law, as are discoverable on the subject in question. That which our LORD has said respecting lesser moral commandments, may well extend, in spirit, to lesser doctrines. The Christian's duty is to cherish all which CHRIST has taught, when Scripture shows that He has taught it ; and theirs will be the surest blessing who receive His Word entire, and are not offended at it.

## CHAPTER II.

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### SCRIPTURE INTIMATIONS OF THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

THERE is a striking passage in the last chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, at the close of a highly figurative description of man's decay finding its end in death, the terms of which imply a confident persuasion of two things ; namely, that a separation will take place at death between the body and the soul, and that while the body then perishes, the soul does not. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was ; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." "Of which words," says Bishop BULL, "the plain and evident sense is this : Whereas man consists of two parts, body and soul ; the condition of these two, when a man dies, will be

very different. For the body—having been at first taken out of the dust of the earth, and so of a corruptible constitution—shall go back into the earth again, and moulder into dust ; but the soul—as it is of another and more excellent original (as having been at first inspired immediately by God Himself into the body), shall not perish with the body, but return to that God from whom it came ; in whose hand it shall continue safe and unhurt, according to that language of the Book of Wisdom—the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and there shall no torment touch them.”

It will be noticed, that the words assign no *term* of separation : they do no more than say that such a separation shall *be*. Nor is it to be taken for granted that he who, under inspiration, left them on record, was himself aware of their complete meaning. More probably they had a depth beyond *his* reach ; and if they stood alone in Scripture on the subject,

*we*—even with the later knowledge brought by JESUS CHRIST—should not be warranted in using them as teaching any thing with certainty, beyond the *fact* of separation between body and soul at death. For proper insight into their full force, and for supplying what they leave unspoken of, we must refer to the *New Testament*. And it will be the object of this chapter to collect from thence, under a safe and sober guidance, the more material points of *Gospel* doctrine, touching this middle state between death and the general resurrection; or, in other words which may appear to bring the matter somewhat nearer home, between each individual Christian's dying and his being called to judgment. Reasons have been already given for the too-common silence of Christian teachers concerning this strong argument for Christian living. Yet nothing can be much more plain than that our Church has a distinct opinion on the subject, and holds out to us a clear doctrine on it. Witness the language of its Burial

Office: "Forasmuch as it hath pleased ALMIGHTY GOD *to take unto Himself the soul* of our dear brother departed, we therefore commit his *body* to the *ground*, Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." Here is that separation between soul and body at death, so confidently spoken of by Solomon, as plainly pointed out as it could well be. And it is not less surely taught in what next follows, that the more perishable part of man (his *body*) is laid up in the grave to wait the general resurrection, *then* to be "changed." When that shall be, we do not know; but we are positively sure that it is *not* to follow instantly on each one's death. The death of thousands upon thousands is already past; the resurrection is not yet come. That still remains, and may remain for ages more, an article of *faith* only. And hence our declaration of a belief, without which we cannot be *Christians*, in "the resurrection of *the body*." Why should the body thus be *specified*, without the soul, unless the

two meanwhile were separate? Which that they are, is not less plainly taught in the succeeding collect, through an assertion that the *spirits* of them that depart hence in the LORD, *live* with ALMIGHTY GOD; that with HIM “the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity.” By which is meant, beyond all doubt, that they are so at once; immediately—without delay, or intervening length of time.

Of course the question is, how far this teaching of our Book of Common Prayer is in agreement with the Scripture, interpreted by the consent of earliest times. And this is what is to be looked into, and to which an answer is to be collected step by step—“line upon line.”

1. One principle of Gospel doctrine, then, touching the soul's condition after death, most surely is, that it *continues*; in other words, that it is still alive somewhere. That it departs out of the body is unquestionable; for then, and not till then, it is, that life and heat

forsake the body, and it becomes a *corpse*. But not so does the soul decay or perish. Observe an incident in Gospel history, and learn from it that the soul remains in being. When our LORD commanded the daughter of Jairus to arise, St. Luke informs us that "*her spirit came again*, and she arose straightway." —Her spirit came again; *i.e.* came back—returned into its former dwelling. The maiden was most surely dead. Not only had a messenger been sent to stop Jairus (who had set out to bring our LORD to her relief) with tidings that his daughter was dead; but when CHRIST notwithstanding came on, and bade the mourners not to weep, saying, "She is not dead, but sleepeth," they "laughed Him (we are told) to scorn, knowing that she was dead."

Now here observe, the *body* was not gone away, although the *spirit* was. The body had not been removed, and consequently had no need to "come again." *That* lay before the

eyes of them that saw the miracle, at once the same and not the same which they had known in intercourse before : the same in form and feature, except so far perhaps as sickness might have wrought some partial change of countenance ; but not the same, so far as now it lay a lifeless lump before them, deprived of sense and motion by the spirit's departure. Wherefore it was the spirit only that had a need to return. But how could it have come again, if it had not subsisted or continued somewhere else, during its absence from the body ? And this agrees with what was just now quoted from the Book of Wisdom, that "the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God."

2. This might not by itself, however, prove much, if evidence stopped here. It is but as a first link of a chain. Join it, however, to a next consideration concerning the departed soul, and what shall we say then ? Which next consideration is—that the spirit not only *continues*, but *perceives*. It is alive to what is

going on around it ; and if so, must needs be capable of hope or fear, of pain or pleasure. Mark what our blessed LORD Himself expressly tells us, in showing to the Sadducees that there must be a resurrection of the dead : “Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by GOD, saying, I am the GOD of Abraham, and the GOD of Isaac, and the GOD of Jacob? GOD is not the GOD of the *dead*, but of *the living*.” The argument is very remarkable ; and is not, in reality, at all difficult to comprehend, because it happens that we know, with so much positive exactness, not merely that “Abraham is dead” (as the Jews, on one occasion, tauntingly reproached our LORD), but also what was done with his body after death—as well as with the bodies also of Isaac and of Jacob. A single passage from the dying charge of Jacob to his sons—who, let it be observed, *did* as he commanded them—will set the truth before us : “I am to be gathered unto my people ; bury me with my

fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; and there they buried Isaac." Quite certain it must be, accordingly, that—now for hundreds of years before our SAVIOUR spake the words just quoted, the "dust" of these same bodies of the patriarchs must have been returned to the earth as it was. There was not any thing to hinder *them* from seeing corruption. Yet here our LORD distinctly says, that they are "living unto God." How can that be affirmed of any thing except their *souls*? And what less can our SAVIOUR's words imply, than that their *spirits* know and feel both that they live, and that they shall continue to live, by the power of God, until the day of resurrection? The more this instance is considered, the stronger will its witness to a middle state be found to be.

Take another instance to a like effect. Our Saviour said to His disciples on another occasion—"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul : but rather fear HIM which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." What does *that* seem to teach !

It is not hard to see and understand, that if the case were so, that body and soul became insensible and lifeless together ; then any one who killed the body must of necessity, and to a like extent, kill the soul also. For, be it borne in mind, the body can die only till the day of resurrection. Whatever men may do unto it now, it will be raised again to life then. And till that day the soul would die also, if its whole life and powers of perceiving depended only on its union with the body. But here our LORD assures us that men cannot kill the soul. Must it not, then, have separate life and power of perception—a *being* of its own—until the time of its re-union with the body ?

3. But we now go a step further. There is good ground for being satisfied, that every soul, on its departure from the body, *goes to* what Scripture calls "*its own place.*" Which means (according to the primitive interpretation of Scripture), a place suited to its works done in the body; and therefore a place of happiness or misery, according to those works.

This is inferred, with powerful argument, from what took place after our LORD's ascension.

The number of names together were, at that time, about an hundred and twenty. And Peter stood up in the midst of these disciples, and called on them to choose an apostle in the room of Judas the traitor. Two being fixed upon for choice, "they prayed and said, Thou LORD, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two Thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might *go to his own place.*" It

may be that we should not easily determine the proper force of this expression without some other knowledge to assist us. But when there is abundant testimony, as Bishop Bull has shown by copious induction, that "in the apostolic age, to go to any one's *own place* was an accustomed phrase, to signify a person's going, presently after death, into his proper place and state, either of happiness or misery, according to the life he had before lived," there is scarce room for reasonable doubt as to the true signification of the words.

But, independently of this testimony, bring these words fairly to the test of CHRIST's own parable of the rich man and Lazarus. It is not necessary to produce at length a place of Scripture so well known. All will remember how Lazarus is said expressly to have been carried, *on his death*, by angels into Abraham's bosom, and the rich man, immediately on death also, to be tormented in the unseen place (or *Hades*). It has been said, 'because the solemn

truths here shadowed forth are set before us in the form of *parable*, that therefore no conclusions are to be drawn from this passage of Scripture as to the soul's state after death. Yet it is surely plain to humble and believing minds, that to convey a *guiding notion on this very point*, is of the very scope and main design of the parable. Strip it of this significance, and we reduce these awful words of HIM that is to be the JUDGE of all, to idle words of mere imagination. Unless it can be shown that this one parable is quite of different kind from all the rest, it must be grounded on *the real constitution of things*, in all its leading circumstances. And one of these, its leading circumstances, most evidently teaches this, *viz.* that there are, somewhere in God's universal empire, two distinct mansions of *separate and disembodied spirits*; the one of misery—to which they are removed, when taken out of the world, who have neglected or despised the will of God; the other, an abode

of happiness, wherein the righteous are in rest and joy, until the day of full reward: "the wicked being tormented at present with a piercing remorse of conscience, and looking for a far more dreadful vengeance yet to fall upon them; the good being refreshed with peace of conscience, now fixed unchangeably, and with unspeakable comforts of God, and yet joyfully waiting for a greater happiness at the resurrection."

4. But if our LORD here speaks in parable, He does no longer so in His most merciful assurance to the repentant thief upon the cross. There certainly He speaks plainly, and speaketh no proverb;—"Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." This case, however, has been spoken of in the preceding chapter. We need not doubt that what is there called *Paradise*, is the same state of rest intended in the parable by *Abraham's bosom*. What it concerns us further to observe and bear in mind is this—that both

these passages alike imply an *intermediate* state of happiness, and not that *highest and supreme Heaven*, which will receive the faithful *after judgment*. As it is well observed by Dr. Townson, CHRIST spake these words respecting Paradise upon His day of *death*; but on the morning of His *resurrection*, He said to Mary Magdalene, "I am not yet ascended to my Father" (*i. e.* into heaven). Whence we collect, that paradise, the general receptacle of happy souls in which our LORD *had been*, must be distinct from that high heaven where the throne of GOD is, and into which He *had not yet* ascended. Is not the middle state found here again?

And let not vain philosophy here interpose a needless difficulty. *How* CHRIST, now seated at the right hand of THE FATHER in heaven, may cause His light to shine upon the saints in paradise, is one among those things not seen, of which faith is, and must remain, our only present evidence. But that the fact is so, and

that the spirits of the just now there enjoy a blissful sense, not only of the love of CHRIST, but of His *presence with them*, is reasonably to be gathered from St. Paul's words, in which he writes to the Corinthians, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the LORD (for we walk by faith, not by sight). We are confident, and willing rather to be *absent from the body*, and to be *present with the LORD*." But this is matter which may be left more profitably to private meditation.

5. Only one other point respecting the unseen state shall now be noticed, and it is one of awful importance.

The lot of each departed spirit consigned to its own place in that state, is one that will not be altered. "Besides all this (says Abraham, as represented in the parable, to the rich man), between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that

would come from thence." This also is among the leading and essential circumstances of the parable. It follows, that while the blessed souls will never forfeit the happiness which their obedience has attained, through the mercies of GOD in CHRIST JESUS, the wicked and unhappy will, in like manner, never recover that which by their disobedience they have lost. Both must continue as they are unto the great day. The sentence *then* to be pronounced, we must suppose will heighten *in degree* what each before has suffered or enjoyed, but will not alter either lot *in kind*. As the tree falls, so must it lie. We know of no repentance after death. All our approach to knowledge on the point before us ends here.

All else that is revealed to us in Holy Writ concerning things to come, belongs more to the day of final judgment than to the intermediate state. The resurrection will take place in its appointed time ; and (as may have been read on many a grave-stone, written with

more than average truth in such memorials)—

When the archangel's trump shall sound,  
*And souls to bodies join—*

the *dead* will rise with their bodies, and, together with all who shall be found *alive* in that day, will stand before the judgment-seat of CHRIST, every man to receive the things done in the body. "And the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

The sum of what has been collected then from Holy Scripture comes to this: *viz.* that the soul does not die, neither does it sleep in the grave with the body, but has its separate life and perceptions; and is, upon its separation from the body, forthwith conveyed to its own place—suited to its condition, according as the living individual has done, or set at nought, the will of GOD. That, where its owner shall have quitted this life without sincere and valid repentance, then it must go among the spirits

of the wicked, to wait in misery and terror for the great sentence of the last day : while in a corresponding manner, the penitent and faithful will be carried into a state of rest and peace, in which they will enjoy immediate comfort, and be encouraged with a yet more glorious prospect of happiness to be revealed, in that day when the Judge shall order them, as "good and faithful servants, to enter into the joy of their LORD."

Thus much—according to the simplest and the best interpretations—the Holy Scriptures do inform us touching our future state. And doubtless this is quite as much as, with our present faculties, we have the power of conceiving ; and were it not as much as it is necessary or good for us to know, we may be sure our LORD would have revealed more. Assuredly—when rightly felt, and thoroughly believed—it is sufficient to awaken all our reasonable hopes and fears, and to encourage and sustain our Christian practice. But more

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of this in a succeeding chapter. If, honestly considered, the passages now quoted shall appear to bear any other just construction, well: if not, the proper application will almost force itself upon the conscience—"Be ye ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the SON OF MAN cometh, and His reward is with Him, to give to every man according as his work shall be."

## CHAPTER III.

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### DOCTRINE OF THE INTERMEDIATE STATE A SPECIAL ARGUMENT FOR WELL-DOING.

IN the preceding chapters reasons have been assigned, for which it may be judged probable that the doctrine of the intermediate state, between death and resurrection, is not so often spoken of as might be desired, in ordinary Christian teaching ; and Scripture testimonies have been set in order, showing that such a state there surely *is*, if we receive our faith from Holy Writ. By which is meant, a state of life and consciousness upon the soul's part, in which it is both capable of feeling, and does surely feel, upon the one hand, joy and hope ; upon the other, pain and terror of worse

things to come hereafter, all through the term from its departure out of the body until the day of final judgment. And this same state begins with every individual departing this life, immediately upon his death. It remains to examine the tendency and power of this doctrine as a particular incentive to godliness of living.

Let us begin with imagining an inconsiderate state of mind, which might dispose a person to contend, or think, thus :—"Since *judgment* will at last come, and is confessedly the end of all, what can it matter if we choose rather to believe the interval between it and death to be no other than a sleep—when such a term, let it have been ever so long or ever so short, will seem to all alike only as a moment, upon the sounding of the last trump?" It is too probable, that some such notion may be very common. Yet is it not quite plain, as soon as ever we reflect fairly, that such opinion shows upon the face of it, that it may matter very

much ; and for this evident and simple reason.

*Will* it be so, that such an interval will be (or seem to be) the same to *all alike* ? If so—it follows, that then there is a state in which a common lot shall be the portion (we know not for how long a time) both of the righteous and the wicked. Whilst they who are pronounced “blessed,” as “dying in the LORD,” would “rest from their *labours* ;” they who die adversaries of the LORD, or who have forfeited all share in His promises, would find a corresponding rest from present burthen of their *sins*. Does that look either like God’s truth, as set before us in the Scriptures, or like unerring perfect justice ?

Let but an honest mind think how the matter plainly stands, on any such hypothesis. And let *their* case be first considered, who may have borne for years, in patience, and with perseverance, adversities, afflictions, self-denials, or whatsoever form of this life’s sufferings and trials, expressly with a view that they might

keep the law of CHRIST, for the hope's sake of immortality, and of a better life to come. Such surely know what *labour* is (according to the Scripture sense), and what the blessedness of *rest* from it will be. Unless they had such rest in prospect, would they endure unto the end? For, let it be observed, all who have lived by faith thus, or are still living so, mean all the while, and understand within themselves by *rest*, a state which they should find to *be* rest; in which (to put the matter in the plainest form) they should be perfectly *aware* they were at rest, in a condition of ease and peace. A state of mere forgetfulness could only be to them a sore and cruel *disappointment*. Such a condition is not either what they want, or what they mean. They have not, in effect, so read their LORD's promises. All their whole Christian train of thought and of belief has led them on to a persuasion of, and to a looking for something very different from that. With them, the very notion of a state of

rest is one of positive enjoyment. Although it might be difficult for any man to figure to himself, or (still more) to express in terms, any *exact pattern* of enjoyment, it is quite sure that all the faithful would declare with one consent, they did not mean *insensibility*. This on the one hand.

Upon the other :—they who have kept on living in sin for ten, or twenty, or for three or four score years, know scarce less certainly what is the weight and misery of *that*, notwithstanding that their sense of its oppressive burthen has not prevailed with them to cast it off. By consequence, they also cannot but know how great a blessing it would be, to be relieved from such a weight, although it were but for a time—could such relief be found without trouble or exertion. Simply to cease from bearing such a load, would be to them a precious *boon*. Nothing perhaps would please them better than a condition of forgetfulness, in which they presently should be as though

they had never been ; *i. e.* had never lived at all. A state which would be *loss* to real Christians, would be a *gain* to sinners. The argument to be derived from such a view is altogether in the sinner's favour ; and consequently is of a direct and positive tendency to make the heart of the righteous sad, whom God would not have sad, and to strengthen the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his evil way.

Unquestionably, therefore, it may matter very much indeed, whether we believe the state between our death and resurrection to be no other than a state of sheer insensibility, or one of life and consciousness. And it is not by any means *the same thing*, or, in a more correct phrase, it is not at all a matter of indifference, whether we do, or do not, look to "judgment" alone, as the great end of all, *whatever shall become of us in the interval* after death.

For here we come to a consideration which

may be tested by direct Scripture authority.

St. Peter, in the concluding chapter of his second Epistle, is writing with an eye to the express question of the delay of the great day of judgment. As is stated in the summary of contents at the head of the chapter, "he assureth the disciples of the certainty of CHRIST's coming to judgment, in answer to those scorers who dispute against it; warning the godly, for the long patience of GOD, to hasten their repentance . . . . exhorting them, from the expectation of judgment, to all holiness of life, and again, to think the patience of GOD to tend to their salvation."

Now, as to one point here involved, it must be sure that none can doubt the fact, that this same evil disposition of the scoffers—a disposition to make light of the Divine threatening—is one which has not ceased from among men. If there were scoffers in the Apostle's day, we should but blind ourselves to a continual peril

of the soul by thinking there are none such now. Nor are there open scorners only to be found; but, even more abundantly, loose thinkers, who, in spirit, answer to the prophet's description of "*men that are settled on their lees*, that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will He do evil." By which expression may be understood, men, all whose notions are settled on the dregs of careless habits, so as no longer practically to have God in their thoughts, and who have gone on living at ease, till they imagine that He does not concern Himself with the affairs of the world.

If there may be too many found of both these sorts, it is unhappily sure that either of these two frames of mind becomes destructive of all sincere and reverent belief. And if it was already so, when the Apostle wrote, that some had even then begun to falter in their stedfastness because the day of judgment was *not yet* come, it cannot well be doubted that the snare must still prevail, when eighteen

hundred years have since passed, and still the promise of CHRIST's coming rests where it did! We need not scruple to confess, that it both is, and can only be, an exercise of *faith* in men, to regulate their thoughts and actions constantly by the remembrance and continued expectation of a day which has already been so long delayed, and which—although it needs must actually *be* nearer than then it was, by just so many years—is still uncertified by any clear, discernible, and undeniable signs of closer approach. To see that this must naturally be, we have but to observe the way in which men *do* receive and treat the solemn warnings of that day, which they so often hear. There must be something fatally at work within, to counteract what Scripture tells us, and we profess to believe, of the reality and terrors of that day.

Examine but a single instance, on the impressive declaration of St. Paul: "We are sure that the judgment of God is according to

truth against them which commit such things ; and thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God . . . . in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds." Reflect how often we are assured of this, and look upon it with our eyes as written, and hear it sounded in our ears as spoken in the book of life, in ways which force us to be well aware of such and many like words. If a full Christian faith, as to this promise of our LORD's coming, were kept alive and active in men, would it be possible to see the things we do see? Consider what the things are of which St. Paul is here speaking. Deeply afflicting is that catalogue of sins, which has been given just before, wherein he mentions sinners "filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness ; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity ;

whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful ; who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

*These* are the things of which St. Paul is speaking, for the reproof of which he makes appeal to the great day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. And how far may we think that this great terror of the LORD, which should persuade men, prevails to the extinction of these sins now, even among *Christians* ?

That is a question to which all can but too sorrowfully give an answer. There must be something, then, perniciously at work within the spirits of men, to quench, to such a lamentable extent, the spirit of this article of Christian faith, that "CHRIST shall come to judge

the quick and the dead." And it may be, that many evil influences join to work this full effect ; but it is at the least probable, not to say certain, that the *remoteness* of the day of judgment contributes in no small degree, for one cause, to weaken that which ought to be its power as a prevailing argument for Christian living. Men do not shape distinctly to themselves an issue that appears so very far off. In point of fact, too many draw from this long-suffering of God exactly the wrong lesson : instead of using it as an effectual motive to immediate repentance, they make it but a shelter to themselves for continuing in sin. Few may speak openly to such profane extent ; but thousands ask, or think, within themselves, "Where is the promise of His coming?" Hence, when they hear discourse or voice of power, reasoning of righteousness and judgment to come, the truth, though it may make them tremble at the moment, does not *come home* with saving influence ; it seems

to tell of things more distant than they have faculties to grasp. They are assured that *death* will come to all; of that they have experience; that is a boundary of which they have some understanding. But when shall *judgment* follow? "The world has lasted eighteen hundred years already since many (as would seem) were daily looking for the promised coming of the SON OF MAN; why may it not yet last as many more? At all events, the evil day is *far off*. And if not only this be so, but if it be the truth, that nothing worse than a long sleep, through all such length of years, be all that comes immediately on death, there will be at least so much *respite*, even for the most heinous transgressors." So, in effect, will many cheat themselves to argue, whose interest it is to shrink from truth, and to dispute or doubt as much of it as ever they can; from whence it is no very wide step, with those of a more daring spirit of misbelief, to brave the further question, "Will ever worse

ensue at all?" *Then* all that desperate propensity which is in man to run extreme risks, to take the *chances* which he thinks may happen in his favour from *putting off* unwelcome reckonings, begins to do its natural and ruinous work. Most sure it is, that Scripture all the while shows, every where, the utter vanity of such deceitfulness of sin; but people *act upon it* notwithstanding. For, that which men in general are apt to be content with, as being what will meet the moment's need, is nothing but a present cloke for indolence or sin; and this they seem, in their impiety, to find in the remoteness of the Judgment-day.

Now, in the proper, simple doctrine of the middle state, when urged with safe authority of Scripture, and grafted on a Christian's settled stock of faith and thought, there is a special force that may arrest men's *understandings* more, for their eternal benefit, as well as touch their feelings. That doctrine leaves no room for doubt of what shall come *as*

*soon as life is ended* : by consequence, it brings the hope of recompense, or dread of penalty, as practically near to every individual as the day of his own death. There is not any unknown term of which to run the hazard *here*. That sure event (of every one's own death) is not in any case so far off, but that, by God's blessing, a sense of its reality and absolute certainty may be effectually stirred in many a mind which seems incapable of being moved by the more distant warning. He must be verily a bold transgressor, if not a scoffer altogether, who can persuade himself to listen quite unconcernedly to such a thought, as that of a direct passage of the soul "into its own place" upon its separation from the body, (meaning, as said before, the place of happiness or misery which it has earned, or rendered proper for itself, by deeds done in the body,) and this without a moment of delay, and without either hope or fear (according as the case may be) of

any change thenceforward, until the day of final doom !

In brief, the difference between our prospect of the judgment to come, with or without a right persuasion as to the state between it and death, may be described in *this* manner :—The judgment, in itself, is far away ; death, though uncertain always, is yet comparatively near at hand ; and if this be the case with death itself, it must be also with a state, be it of joy or sorrow, that shall begin at once from death. That point, accordingly, which ought to move the heart to righteousness of life, is rendered *dim*, through *distance*, when we contemplate *judgment alone*, and loses, in proportion, its effect and power. When we regard the *intermediate state*, it is brought more into the *foreground*, nearer to sight and full inspection. We come to see it much more clearly, and are more likely, in proportion, to be impressed by it. In one case, if the question be proposed, “ Where is the promise of His coming ? ” we

can but make reply, "It will stand sure; but *when*, is one among the secret things which the Most High has kept within His own power." But on the other (where there is right and fixed persuasion of the middle state) *this* answer is at hand, and may be given boldly—"The promise of His coming is made good *when each one dies*." And when our Lord declares, "Behold, I come quickly," the Christian who believes thus is at once able to receive the saying. He knows that every one's own death *will* quickly come; and is not this belief of what forthwith shall follow, a powerful and special motive for listening to that which CHRIST subjoins,—“Behold, I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown?”

Such are a few plain thoughts upon the very solemn subject under discussion. They have been made as short and simple as possible, with view to leave a single and distinct impression. It might serve only to divide and

weaken that, to enter into other uses of this doctrine of the middle state. But those who shall be so minded, may very profitably follow out and trace its bearings on, and its connexion with, two other articles of Christian faith ; namely, the "descent into hell," and the "resurrection of *the body*." The subject shall be ended here with Bishop Bull's affecting application of it (somewhat abridged) in which that calm, yet very powerful writer addresses, in their turns, the faithful and the transgressors. Of course he speaks but of the doctrine Scripturally understood.

And, first (he says), "this doctrine is matter of abundant consolation to all *true Christians*, when death approaches them. It tells them they are sure not only of a blessed resurrection at the last day, but of reception into a very happy place and state in the mean time ; where they shall rejoice in the certain expectation of a crown of glory, to be bestowed upon them at the day of recompense—a place (wherever it

is) of rest—and that not a stupid, insensible rest, but a rest attended with lively perception of a far greater joy and delight than this whole world can afford; a place where dwell the spirits of the just already made perfect, and which the SON OF GOD Himself visits and enlightens with the rays of His glory. A place where there shall be no wicked man to corrupt or offend, no devil to tempt, no sinful flesh to betray its possessors; a place from whence all sorrow, because all sin, is banished; where there is nothing but joy, and yet more joy expected. This, Christian, is the place to which death calls thee. Why, therefore, shouldest thou be afraid to die? Yea rather, why shouldest thou not, when God calls thee to it, willingly and cheerfully die, desiring to depart and to be with JESUS CHRIST, which is far better? If, when thou diest, thou wert to fall into a state of sleep, and to have no perception until the last day; were darkness then to overshadow thee, until the light of CHRIST's glorious

appearance at the resurrection came upon thee, that might indeed, and not without reason, make thee unwilling to die, and desirous to continue longer here, where *is* some comfort, and some enjoyment of CHRIST, though faint and imperfect . . . . But, GOD be thanked, CHRIST, and His Apostles, and the disciples of the Apostles, have taught us better things. Wherefore, let us comfort one another with these words."

Thus speaks this excellent Bishop, on the happy side. And then he adds—

"But, secondly, this same doctrine deserves to be considered very seriously by all wicked men.

"Let such remember, if they die wicked, (and who is there that knows how soon he may die ?) they are immediately consigned to a place and state of irreversible misery. They have, by choice, been wicked here ; they go into 'their own place' there ; a place of wretched spirits, that are continually vexed at

sad remembrance of all their former sins and follies, and feel the wrath of God upon them, and tremble at the apprehension of still greater wrath to come . . . . This, sinner, is the miserable place and state into which thou shalt immediately enter when thou diest, if thou diest as thou now art.

“Do not deceive thyself with thoughts of a *reprieve* until the day of judgment, or think that thou shalt be till then in an insensible state, and not tormented before that time. The state of misery begins immediately on death, to them who die in their sins. Delude thyself with no vain dreams of man’s imagining. In the same miserable state in which thou diest, thou must remain until thy misery shall be consummated in the great day. Consider this, ye that forget God, lest He pluck you away, and there be none to deliver you.”

It is no answer to this earnest admonition, nor any just objection to it, that it is strong and awful, beyond our ordinary thoughts and

frame of mind. That it most surely is ; yet, if the doctrine be admitted, none will deny such word of exhortation to be at once a warranted and honest deduction from it. The question is, of the existence of the doctrine as positively to be "read in Scripture, and to be proved thereby." This is the point to be determined ; the clue already assumed as proper being taken for guidance. Nothing in these few pages has been addressed to the mere feelings of the reader, to the exclusion of his calm and sober judgment. Of course, it is their object to contend that the doctrine *is* thus to be found in Scripture. There is a chasm (as would seem) in the moral history of our being, which cannot be reasonably supplied without it. Its unmingled tendency, when taught in its simplicity, is towards righteousness of life. If any think it is embodied *virtually* in the Apostles' Creed, and therefore of a primary value, the writer is disposed to join in such persuasion. The reasons for *distinct and actual*

enforcement of it, in all due proportion, become so much the stronger. If one particular omission in the Nicene be urged, let that be balanced by the language of the Athanasian. But these are points which have not been entered into, it being wished to keep this little book clear of every thing like doubtful disputation. For the same reason, its argument is confessedly *one-sided*; since where it shall be held sufficient, *the other side* need not be mooted. It is injurious to the simplicity and the integrity of Christian faith, needlessly to place wholesome doctrines in abeyance, or (in untheological language) to make them "open questions." That is the "tossing to and fro" which ought on every score to be avoided. Unhappily our practice, as a Christian brotherhood, is not so pure as that we can afford to dispense with any one efficient motive towards its improvement. Let those whose work it is to teach lawfully, consider this point well and often, with reference to this particular doctrine of

**64 A SPECIAL ARGUMENT FOR WELL-DOING.**

*the middle state.* If fair attention may be won to the importance of this, enforced in Scriptural simplicity, these chapters will not have been written in vain.

THOUGHTS

ON

Family Burial-Places.

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## THOUGHTS

ON

### Family Burping-Places.

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WHEN, a few years ago, a prince of royal blood, in contravention of what is almost an instinctive feeling of humanity, expressly willed that he should not be buried in the sepulchre of his fathers, and rather chose to rest apart from all his princely kindred, amongst a mixed multitude, the act—enjoined with an ill-judging ostentation—not only failed of winning any popular applause, as though its author thereby showed a mind superior to vulgar prejudices, but it was felt by every pious and reflecting mind, to be an act of blameable and painful irreverence. It was not permitted

without great reluctance ; many sighed over it in secret, and not a few cried open shame : but it found sympathy and favour no where, except with free-thinkers and misbelievers.

So strong and general is this desire, of finding a last earthly home among our kindred. And though it may perhaps be felt most strongly among the higher classes of society, it would be altogether a mistake, and contrary to a large body of experience, to suppose it confined to these. In illustration of its influence upon a lower scale, a case within the writer's knowledge may be mentioned, where, out of fourteen consecutive burials in a retired country churchyard, no fewer than eleven were of scattered dwellers, brought home from less or greater distances to sleep with their respective families. Of which eleven individuals not one was of above a moderate middle rank, while several were day-labourers.

An universal feeling of this sort seems worth inquiring into, both with respect to any sanc-

tion which it may find in Scripture, and also to the proper inference to be deduced from it, in way of lesson, or *moral*.

1. As to the testimony of the Scripture on this subject, let us first transport ourselves in thought to the death-bed of the patriarch Jacob, of whom we know that he "died in faith, not having received the promises of God, but having seen them afar off;" and that he "was persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed himself a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth."

Of him we find, that when his end was come, he gathered round him all his twelve sons, and pronounced on each of them, in turn, a father's last blessing. "Every one according to his blessing, he blessed them." And then he went on to declare, in an explicit and emphatic manner, his wishes on the subject of his burial. And very lively the description is, and very touching are his words: "I am to be gathered unto my people; bury me with my fathers in

the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying-place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah." Such words show plainly how much the subject pressed upon his mind. And that he had the point greatly at heart, is further evident from what he had before required of Joseph in particular; when he gave charge, and made him "swear to deal kindly and truly with him:" not to bury him in Egypt, but to secure his lying with his fathers, and to "bury him in their burying-place." It was done with him accordingly, as he desired. Joseph and his other sons "did unto him as he had commanded them, and carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah."

The like—with variation only in its precise form, to suit necessity and circumstances at the time—occurred with Joseph afterwards. He also felt himself about to die, and had the same desire respecting burial which Jacob had before him. “And he took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence;” *i. e.* into the promised land, to bury them there. And they embalmed his body with all care, laying it up, as it were, in store; and when at length, after many years, the bondage of the children of Israel in Egypt came to an end, and they were now departing from it, Moses forgot not, and neglected not, to take “the bones of Joseph with him; for he (Joseph) had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.”

It is to be admitted, that in these two instances of the patriarchs, Jacob and Joseph,

there was something peculiar. Doubtless there was, in their case, something beyond, and separated more or less from the mere natural instinct through which they both desired to find a grave in their own land, and not among a strange people. In *them* there was a special exercise of faith, by which they thus declared belief in God's promise, that He would give the land of Canaan to them and their posterity. But this it is not necessary to discuss; since there is nothing in it to nullify the evidence supplied by these two instances of the strong natural desire that is in men to rest in death with those who have been dear to them in life, or with the generations of their own kindred. The reader must determine for himself how far, or whether at all, there be implied in these or other instances any thing like an approveableness of the feeling in the sight of God. There is at least enough of lawful inference to prove it innocent; whence, if the lesson which it seems to teach be of a good tendency, may we

not venture to advance a step, and deem it praiseworthy?

There are many other evidences to be collected from the Scripture history, which throw a strong light on the subject. Undoubtedly these are, for the most part, recorded on a high scale. But nothing else than this was natural, or was to be expected, seeing how large a portion of that history is meant to chronicle the lives and doings of the *kings* of Israel and Judah. Being designed to tell of only the more marked events which happened in their successive reigns, it was not likely that it would be found to mention other things or persons than those which had attained to some considerable notice. Just as no modern history tells any thing of undistinguished individuals, living in quietness apart from public life; but only speaks of those in high places, or those who, in their generation, had obtained some sort of notoriety. Yet not the less might such an usage as the one now spoken of, have

been familiar to the humblest ranks as well as to the highest, although we find no mention made of it, except as practised by the higher.

The evidence is therefore to be looked at under this remembrance ; and so observing it, we find it written expressly of most of the kings of Israel and Judah, that they "slept with their fathers," or were "buried with their fathers, in the city of David;" or else some other words are used, betokening the same thing, or, where exceptions are, these do but strengthen the prevailing rule. And that the feeling, and the usage grafted on it, were not confined to *them*, is to be learnt distinctly (not to adduce the well-known pathetic passage in the book of Ruth) from the recorded instance of the aged Barzillai ; who, though he was "a great man," was yet a private individual. "Let thy servant (he says, when David gave him invitation to come and dwell at Jerusalem,) turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried in the grave of my father and of

my mother." So that there is little question as to the mind and practice of the chosen people of old, touching their place of burial—as well before as after the delivery of the law by Moses.

Not that there was among them any rule so rigid as to admit of no exception, or any ordinance or law revealed of the Most High upon the subject. No more is meant to be affirmed, than that this was their common feeling, wrought by a natural heart's desire, and their accustomed practice. If circumstances so demanded, there were exceptions made; as may be gathered from the words of Jacob concerning his beloved wife, Rachel. One needs must think, when Jacob, speaking of the cave of Machpelah, adds the remembrance mentioned before—"and there I buried Leah"—that it would have been a more soothing recollection still, could he have said the same of Rachel also. But she had died upon a journey, in giving birth to Benjamin; and it is probable

that means were not at hand for any other burying than one concluded with dispatch, and on the spot. Thus we find Jacob saying at a later day to Joseph, "As for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way when yet there was but a little way to come to Ephrath, and I buried her there in the city of Ephrath, the same is Bethlehem." We must in reason judge that prudence and convenience, and most of all necessity, would, and did, regulate and limit their common usage in this matter; but such as has been stated seems surely to have been their natural feeling, and their familiar practice.

Nor has the feeling been confined to them; for it is one implanted in our constitution; and thus the usage has descended and prevailed under the Gospel, as surely as in the times of old. For it may safely be affirmed, that while the Gospel is addressed expressly to the *correction* of our nature, and to a *subjugation* of

the flesh to the Spirit, wherever these are contrary the one to the other ; it never thwarts, forbids, or stifles any natural yearning directed to a proper object, and where its tendency is only to good. And of such sort is that instinctive wish now spoken of; the exercise of which has been kept up, from age to age, in this our own land, and which (as hinted in the outset of these thoughts) prevails extensively among us to this day ; not among kings and princes only, nor yet among the great ones of the land alone ; but widely throughout all degrees, and among all classes, wherever a fulfilment of the wish is found to be within the bounds of reason and prudence.

So much (in way of faint outline) for the light thrown upon the subject in Scripture.

2. What gives a value to this feeling, and guides us also to the lesson to be rightly learnt from it, seems capable of being very simply told.

Its worth and tendency to good, arises from

the witness which it bears to man's belief in immortality ; to an instinctive faith within the heart—before, and independently of any confirmation of it by the Gospel—that there is something in our nature that will live beyond the grave. It might not be a tenable position, perhaps, that all who entertain this feeling are fully conscious to themselves either of its source, or of its real import ; but a very little reflection may serve to show, that it is quite incredible (not to say impossible) that any wide-spread care, or general strong desire, should be in men to join their kindred in *the grave*, if they imagined only—and how much less if they were confidently persuaded—that all our being was to end there. The triumphs and effects of death and burial are not matters of faith. We see these with our eyes, and know them with a positive knowledge. “*LORD,*” said the sister of the dead Lazarus, “by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days.” We see what lifeless corpses are, and

know that, when the hour of each shall come, our own must needs be like all others. Further, we know that this its earliest stage is but the fairest form of death. In this, there still remain, for a brief space at least, the features we have known and loved, and something like a semblance of humanity. Yet even this—ill-fitted as it is to kindle any thing like such a longing as is now spoken of—is quickly to depart, and the whole mass to fall a prey to worms and creeping things! Can there be such a strong anxiety to join our kindred in a state like this?

It is not necessary to follow out a view so very painful in the thoughts which it excites, that we instinctively recoil from it. Were all the care that is in relations to meet in common sepulture confined, in truth and in reality, to *that alone*, there could not well be found a care so absolutely useless, or so entire a vanity. Where any one could really persuade himself, or be persuaded, that when his body was committed

to the ground—earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust—he should become and be for ever, with all before and all that were to follow him, *mere senseless dust*, and nothing more ; where, in a word, he could believe that every thing was *there ended*, what could it matter to him, in such frame of mind, *where* his remains might rest, or in *what* company ? The patriarch's feeling could not find a place in any mind where cold and unbelieving thoughts like these bore sway. Nevertheless, such feeling most assuredly exists in men, to very great extent. And in proportion as it does exist, what can it do but testify to an indwelling faith and tacit expectation of a sure life to come ? Let it be again admitted, that many very probably may entertain the wish without distinctly knowing why ; but the existence of it indicates a longing after immortality, from the very nature of the case. Here is its value ; and hence it is a feeling which the Gospel would not discourage, but one which may be

much more justly held to be commendable, when cherished and indulged within the bounds of reasonable faith.

When therefore, by its positive revelation of a life to come, the Gospel comes in aid of this longing of our nature, by which so many testify, even of themselves, a hope of future existence; and when, by the resurrection of our LORD and Saviour, it guarantees to faithful Christians a sure and certain hope of resurrection to eternal life, how does the case appear to stand *then*, and what is the true lesson to be learnt, from pondering on all these things?

Is it not this? A mere re-union *in the grave*, it has been shown, were utter vanity. But there is a re-union *elsewhere*, reserved for all who truly die in faith and fear of God, and of His Son JESUS CHRIST. And this is to be found in paradise first, and finally in heaven. The moral is obvious. Those who desire *indeed* to meet again with friends and kindred gone before them, in a condition not of senseless decay,

but of mutual consciousness, should learn what blindness and self-deceiving it is, to feel anxiety about the less, while they perhaps are overlooking all the while all preparation for the greater rejoining. The passage into blessedness is not from family burying-places, but from a Christian life and death. The Scripture speaks no dark or doubtful things, either in telling us beforehand who shall be blessed, or who shall *not* inherit the kingdom of God. And certainly the *life* of this kingdom, and not the silence of the grave, is what the longing for re-union really points to, and what alone is worth our care.

Now—paradoxical as it may seem, and little as it may appear to correspond with daily experience—this higher and eternal re-uniting of kindred and friends is much more universally within our power, than that which on a superficial view appears so much more easy to be compassed ; *i. e.* the joining dust to dust in this world's sepulchres. And possibly this is a thought which, duly followed out, may prove

of useful influence where it has not occurred before ; since few things can be more demonstrably sure, when means of grace to guide the Christian into blessedness are freely offered, and are open to all. The Christian's need is only of a right and stedfast use of these ; and all the rest is settled by the simple truth, that " God is faithful who has promised." Herein, if any where, most surely rich and poor meet together—humbler and higher—learned and unlearned. Faithfulness shown with one talent meets here upon a strict level that which is shown with five, or ten ; so far as respects the great end attainable by each entrusted servant, of entering into the joy of his LORD.

Whereas—in regard to that other and lower re-union—common, nay almost universal, as such a wish and feeling seems to be among men, there are a thousand accidents of life which render it a thing *impossible* for all to find a burial with their fathers and kindred. We need but to think of the numbers parted

upon earth, who die in far-off lands ; of those again who find their grave within the great and wide sea ; (a case, let it be observed in passing, expressly recognised in Scripture, where it is written, " And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ;") again, of hindrances so often caused by poverty, and of more numerous impediments besides, that cannot be named ; to be convinced that, let the desire be ever so commendable, it is impossible for all to realize the wish of being " buried with their fathers." Does not the whole subject supply us with a fresh evidence of the Divine goodness, in yielding so distinct a proof that God is no respecter of persons ? The admonition from the whole is very short and plain ;—that all sincere believers, as they would hope indeed to be re-joined with those who have been most dear to them in life, should reverently fear lest, a promise being left to all of entering into the heavenly rest, any of themselves should seem to come short of it.

Hints for Epitaphs  
IN  
COUNTRY CHURCHYARDS.

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"Judge nothing before the time."

1 Cor. iv. 5.



## Introductory Remarks.

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A REPUBLICATION of Mr. Snow's interesting *Lyra Memorialis* (of the first edition of which the present writer was not aware) makes it advisable to state, that the substance of the remarks which follow, together with the larger portion of the Epitaphs, bears, in the original manuscript, the date of 1842. And he had actually corresponded with his publisher on the subject, when No. CXL. of the *Quarterly Review* made its appearance in September of that year. There, in an article on "Sepulchral Monuments," occurred an exclamation, "And the Epitaphs—but this is a subject not briefly to be touched upon, and our space is come to an end."

Although the suppressed feeling of the reviewer here could only be matter of inference, so strongly did it seem to be in harmony with thoughts then in his mind, that the author felt the passage as an encouragement to proceed with a design, which he found afterwards *exactly* described, in a passage quoted by Mr. Snow from the CXLVIth number. "We are still in want of a good collection of posies for churchyards, to replace

' Afflictions sore, long time I bore :'

and others of that class. Perhaps the simpler and older forms of epitaph, imploring mercy and peace, would be the most consonant with right feeling ; but we would hardly debar our rural population from the ' sermons on stones,' which they delight to pore over as they loiter among their fathers' graves before evening service. Only we wish that the poetry and the doctrine put before them were more free from the vulgar extravagances which now

amuse rather than instruct us on village tomb-stones."

Here is a very happy expression of an acknowledged want; and the present writer not only sympathizes with the feeling of unwillingness to debar humble loiterers in churchyards from what he sincerely believes to be a great enjoyment to many, but he is confident that the attachment to "a few verses" on a family grave-stone is so strong among the country population in many districts, that they could not for years to come be brought round to a willing revival of the simpler and older forms of inscription preferred. Whether therefore it be for better or for worse, at any rate some length of time must pass before the existing fashion can be changed, even if it shall ever again be superseded altogether. Wherefore, so long as it shall last, it is and will continue desirable to raise the standard of such memorials, the prevailing average staple of which is discreditable to all parties concerned.

And hence a resolution was all but taken, to place the present "Hints" before the public without delay.

Circumstances, however, occurred to suspend such purpose; and in the mean time, while the specimens have been slumbering for five years, another writer—probably influenced by a very congenial feeling—has in some sort pre-occupied the ground. Nevertheless, this appearance of Mr. Snow's very justly commended little volume not only does not dissuade the present attempt, but rather recommends and stimulates it; and, looking to the modest, generous desire expressed in his preface, that his own book "may commence a good work—the reformation of Protestant Churchyards—and encourage others to proceed on the same mission," it is hoped that, if this still humbler endeavour shall meet his eye, he will be rather pleased than in any way offended by its publication.

It is impossible that any thing can be further from a writer's mind than every thought or

notion of *rivalry* is in the present instance. The writer feels that, in respect of *poetry*, his effusions could bear no comparison with those of Mr. Snow. *His* breathings are poetical; the present stanzas can make no such claim. And not only is this the case, but so completely does Mr. Snow's ingenuous preface exhibit the present writer's own sentiments, that (with the single exception of two short sentences about *antithesis*) the author would be glad to copy and adopt it entire for his own introduction. While this however is so, he thinks the *Lyra Memorialis* (which very *title* rather bespeaks the volume somewhat *above* its intended work) not free from two imperfections: one, that a majority of its "posies," somehow or other, have not so much the quality and character of *epitaphs* as of *meditations*; while, at all events, the refinement of many and the irregularity of their metres makes them, practically, quite unavailable for country use: the other (which is of much greater importance) that,

notwithstanding the highly reverential spirit of the writer, there are too many of the inscriptions which do not escape the snare of "judging before the time." Perhaps none who have not tried the experiment can be aware how very difficult it is wholly to avoid this error, which intertwines itself so very closely with almost any record of *Christian* character. And there is great allowance to be made for an important distinction; namely, that provision made, in even warm terms, for some such characters, in a collection of epitaphs to be applied at the discretion of other persons to individuals wholly unknown, is not to be confounded with sentence virtually passed on any by the author himself. Take these two instances from the *Lyra* as illustrating such distinction:

No. LXXIV.

If cold and nakedness, if hunger, thirst,  
Are sins—of sinners he of all was worst!  
If meekness, patience, and content attest  
*CHRIST's true disciples, he of all was best.*

This is no more than Christian character, supplying lawful inference and cheerful hope. But is a like prudent reserve kept below ?

No. CXXXIX.

“ Come, follow me,” the SAVIOUR said ;  
She rose and follow’d where He led :  
His yoke and burthen meekly borne,  
Although in poverty and scorn,  
Were easy, light, for help was given ;—  
*She follows now the Lamb in heaven.*

Is not “ the judgment here past already ?”  
And so it is in other instances.

Now, whether this defect—perhaps the very worst of all to which epitaphs are liable, and which involves a deeper and more dangerous doctrinal error than general readers can be supposed to be aware of—be quite avoided even in these present specimens, where a very circumspect eye has been kept on St. Paul’s caution as a guiding light, it must be for the reader to determine. If, however, keeping clear of this fault, they may succeed in escaping

also all association with the mean or ludicrous, and be found to stir more or less of reverent impression in the mind of the reader, they will, as compositions, have realized the author's highest aim.

His theory as to any use to be made of this very humble contribution to the common stock of good, is the simplest imaginable. Doubtless clergymen are often applied to, by parishioners or others, for assistance in preparing epitaphs. His desire is, to supply such with a series of *outlines*, by variations of which to suit individual instances, made in the exercise of their own knowledge, judgment, or taste, most of the ordinary contingencies of a country parish may be creditably met, and the feelings of relations be gratified, not only without compromise of Christian truth, but rather with a tendency to enforce it in useful ways. For it is hoped that all the "posies" of this small collection are calculated to stir *some* profitable thought in the mind of the reader, to the effect of "teaching

the rustic moralist to die:" *i. e.* to *live* as one mindful that death must be his inevitable end, and so to remind him seasonably of "things after death."

Even in so small a collection of samples as this, doubtless there will be found much monotony, and too much of what may seem, *collectively*, tedious repetitions. As Mr. Snow justly says, "Thoughts will be found repeated and phrases reiterated. These are almost inevitable faults, which the candid critic will be in no haste to detect, and when detected, will excuse." And it is feared there will not be found very much of valuable *individuality*, although several of the inscriptions are strictly founded on fact, and are really sketches, as entitled. Striking individuality is hardly attainable within any moderate compass of *verse*; and *prose* is generally out of place in country churchyards. As to the existence of individual traits, the writer conceives the actual truth to lie between, or rather to be shared by, the two

opposite assertions—that “most people have no character at all,” and that (as Wordsworth contends) “each person *has* a character or individuality.” Common people on the average *have* character, but not such as it would be either manageable or wise to record too minutely ; such moreover as, if recorded, would fail to be perceptible or intelligible to the majority of “loitering” readers.

Nevertheless their cases very commonly admit of a general breathing of some affecting Christian truth or hope, which can be conveyed best through the medium of verse. And hence it is, that verse is better suited to the records of country churchyards, and of all humbler classes ; while prose is more appropriate to eminent persons, of whom there are more specific details to be given, though often of a less religious complexion. To follow out this thought, however, would be to pursue a disquisition, which is no part of the writer’s purpose.

Let it only be added, that for greater facility of reference—should the collection ever prove of actual use—a sort of classification is attempted, though perhaps not very accurately observed, under four heads ; of which the first, entitled *general*, contains such inscriptions as merely breathe a Christian sentiment, capable of wide application. The second class is general also, but with a more direct reference to the doctrine of the *middle state*. The third, designated as *specific*, is applicable either to particular stages of life, or circumstances of death ; or else specifies some trait of character, or has allusion to a deceased person's particular worldly calling. It has been thought worth while to show how an useful turn might sometimes be given in this last-named direction, if any where survivors should think it desirable ; but this is felt to be a part of the collection needing most indulgence. The fourth class contains positive *individual sketches* of character. So far, however, as his own ex-

perience reaches, the author is compelled to be of opinion that this is a form not very frequently manageable, though certainly the best—wherever cases will admit of it, subject to that control of sincerity and truth which should every where be paramount.

## Hints for Epitaphs.

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### I.

CALL him not good—there is none good but ONE ;  
Yet was his course in humble patience run,  
And he upon the Cross alone relied ;  
Whence, as he lived in faith, in hope he died.

### II.

One who loved his SAVIOUR well,  
Here in hope of pardon lies :  
That dread hour the rest shall tell,  
When the dead to judgment rise.

### III.

Dead !—the Christian does not die ;  
Stedfast is the faithful word :  
He shall live eternally,  
If indeed he loved his LORD.

## IV.

Christian, read in holy fear !—  
He who sleeps in silence here,  
Late was hale and strong as thou :  
He is pass'd to judgment now !  
Life has no abiding stay ;  
Read thy lesson—*watch and pray.*

## V.

Weep not vainly for the dead,  
For whose ransom CHRIST hath bled ;  
But in watchfulness and prayer  
Labour to rejoin them there,  
Whither HE is gone before,  
And the faithful part no more.

## VI.

Vain are man's fondest thoughts ; and oh, how vain  
The fond, rash flatteries of memorial strain !  
Yet did our brother here in peace depart,  
With faith in CHRIST, and humbleness of heart.  
Hope, then, that with the lowly he may stand  
In the great day upon his LORD's right hand.

## VII.

"**LORD**, and what shall this man do?"  
Be there many saved, or few?—  
Ask not questions blind and vain;  
Kiss the rod, and bless the pain  
That shall bid thee watch and pray,  
Mindful of the judgment-day  
Follow thou thy **LORD**, and **HE**  
Will be just to them and thee!

## VIII.

Ask not concerning him who sleeps below,  
What were his frailties;—what is that to thee?  
**CHRIST** is the Judge :—enough for thee to know,  
As he is now, so thou shalt shortly be.

## IX.

Mourner, while thou seek'st relief  
In the tears of natural grief,  
Sorrow not as they, on whom  
Shines no hope beyond the tomb :  
**CHRIST** is risen! Go thy way,  
And prepare thee for **HIS DAY**!

## X.

But for the hope to meet again,  
How could we bear from friends to part ?  
Alas, for unbelieving men—  
Sure they have erred in the heart !

## XI.

He fled for refuge to his Saviour's cross,  
And lived in duty's ways, and died in peace :  
Think not that death can be to him a loss,  
Who from a world of care hath found release.

## XII.

A simple man, who walked through life  
Unknowing and unknown,  
As seeking peace and shunning strife,  
Rests here beneath this stone.  
The world saw little to approve,  
And pass'd him rudely by ;  
Yet was he one whom CHRIST might love  
For his humility.  
Heaven grant that when the trump shall sound,  
And they that sleep awake,  
The peace he sought for may be found  
For his REDEEMER's sake !

## XIII.

Christian, dost thou care to be  
Blessed through eternity?—  
Listen to the dead's still voice  
Guiding thee to happy choice.—  
Whilst the body yet within,  
Learn indeed to die to sin :  
Over such in THAT dread hour,  
Hath the second death no power.

## XIV.

Here sleeps in silence, dust return'd to dust,  
One who, in life beloved, lamented died :  
And in men's favour we too often trust,  
Feeding with perilous hopes our human pride :  
But not in him was wanting holier love,  
And he had faith with penitence and prayer :  
Have thou the same, lest seeming virtues prove,  
For lack of heavenly root, the spirit's snare !

## XV.

One who lived in quiet ways ;  
Look'd to CHRIST, and shrank from praise :—  
What can sculptur'd marble tell,  
That may quicken hope so well ?

## XVI.

Many were the tears that fell  
Over one beloved so well ;  
But a voice from holy Paul  
Bade us haste to dry them all—  
“ Sorrow not as hopeless men ! ”——  
LORD, when Thou shalt come again,  
May our friend departed be  
More than conqueror through THEE !

## XVII.

All ends not here—there is a life in store,  
Which none shall miss, who seek with all the heart ;  
The way is holiness, and CHRIST the door :  
Learn thou to choose in time the better part !

## XVIII.

He whom death has sternly claim'd,  
Was of bounteous soul and kind ;  
Was not of his LORD ashamed,  
Studied his Redeemer's mind :  
The LORD vouchsafe it that he may  
Find mercy of the LORD THAT DAY !

## XIX.

Humbly we hope that death to him was gain,  
To whom God's mercy through His blessed Son  
Gave gracious strength, through long-continued pain,  
Meekly to trust, and say, "*Thy will be done!*"

## XX.

The Church's holy rites were balm,  
As in the peaceful grave we laid  
One who had died in hope so calm,  
'Twas scarcely meet to be afraid.

How wisely thoughts that rose within  
Our guardian Mother then did press !  
LORD, raise us from the death of sin  
Unto the life of righteousness !

## XXI.

'Tis the LORD alone that gave  
More than thou canst e'er repay ;  
Be not unto sense a slave,  
Murmuring when HE takes away !  
Meekly in HIS wisdom rest ;  
HE hath knowledge what is best.

## XXII.

Man that is of woman born,  
Hath but little time to live :  
But there is a glorious morn,  
When the LORD of all shall give  
Unto those that love Him well,  
More than tongue or thought can tell :—  
As thou would'st its dawning see,  
Let His mind be form'd in thee !

## XXIII.

Modest, dutiful, and meek,  
Looking to her Saviour's cross,  
Words could ill the pang bespeak  
Of her sad and early loss.  
What alone can heal the smart ?  
Hope, that she was found possessing  
Dispositions of the heart  
Meet for the REDEEMER's blessing.

## XXIV.

He lived in faithfulness, and died in hope ;  
Yet not for this presume we to forestal,  
Giving our own fond thoughts presumptuous scope,  
His righteous sentence, who is Judge of all.

## XXV.

Vain is human skill to save :  
Parents, children, neighbours, all,  
One by one, into the grave  
Follow, like the leaves that fall.  
Does not each successive end,  
Tempting feebler hearts to break,  
Teach us that we need a friend,  
Such as never can forsake  
Christian, there is only ONE—  
Look to God's BELOVED SON !

## XXVI.

Refrain thy voice from grief, thine eyes from tears ;  
Canst thou believe that CHRIST has died in vain ?  
They who have died in HIM—dismiss thy fears—  
Shall each to his own border come again.

## XXVII.

" I know that my Redeemer lives"—  
O, piercing thought for them, to whom  
His sentence, when THE DAY arrives,  
Can only be a voice of doom !

## XXVIII.

Do not pass unheeding by,  
Where the Christian dead do lie.  
Though thou readest on each stone  
Names recorded there alone,  
Thou art treading hallow'd ground :—  
And 'tis in the graves around,  
Not in titles of the dead,  
That thy lesson may be read ;  
Hearken, as to voice of friend,  
And bethink thee of THE END !

## XXIX.

Some have their good things here, and some hereafter ;  
O, let not self thy living soul benumb !  
There may be future tears for present laughter ;  
This world is past—the other is to come !

## XXX.

Death is but the end below—  
There is judgment yet above ;  
Watch ; as death shall find thee, so  
Must the course of judgment prove.

## XXXI.

All die in Adam ; so in CHRIST shall all  
Be made alive.—Live so, that thou may'st hear  
A welcome summons in the trumpet call,  
That shall proclaim thy Judge and sentence near.

## XXXII.

Write no record of the dead,  
But that CHRIST for him hath bled ;  
And the thought may solace give,  
That the dead in CHRIST shall live.

## XXXIII.

CHRISTIAN, let this stone supply  
Rules to teach thee how to die.  
Thou believest—Show thy faith,  
Doing as thy Master saith :  
Thou repentest—Do not stay,  
Yield the proper fruits to-day.  
Hast thou hope ?—To keep it sure,  
To the end thou must endure.  
Charity ?—Then be thy mind  
To be patient, faithful, kind :  
Making thus thy title good,  
Thou may'st die as Christians should.

## XXXIV.

Weep not for the Christian soul  
That hath reach'd a peaceful goal :  
Rather for thyself lament,  
If thine heart be still intent  
On a world that perisheth :  
Sin alone is sting of death.

## XXXV.

Passer by, whoe'er thou art,  
Read in humbleness of heart ;  
Better thou hadst not been born,  
Than treat solemn things with scorn !  
Read, as hearing thine own knell ;  
Cease from evil, and do well !

## XXXVI.

Boast not the virtues of the dead,  
Nor yet their faults proclaim ;  
There is, who knows what in them led  
To glory—what, to shame.  
Keep then thy stedfast faith, that HE  
The righteous JUDGE of all shall be.

## XXXVII.

If aught thou knowest ill, of him whose rest  
Is here, take heed thou doest not the same :  
If aught of good—or nothing—hope the best,  
But leave it to THE JUDGE to praise or blame.

## XXXVIII.

O that men would learn to prize  
Precious warnings, and be wise ;  
Thinking on their latter end,  
So as to make death a friend,  
Not a foe for ever near :—  
Wake thee, he will soon be here !

## XXXIX.

Do not, kind friends, in blind affection give  
Your tears to me : I have begun to live.

## XL.

What were his virtues ask not—what his sin ;  
To read thine own right lesson, look within :  
He was a man, as thou art ; but his day  
Is past, while thine remaineth. Watch and pray !

## XLI.

Humble, dutiful, and kind—  
To her Maker's will resign'd—  
Sorrow not for her, but keep  
Watch on thine own heart, and weep  
For thyself, if thou be still  
Wandering in paths of ill.  
Sin is what has need of sorrow ;  
Flee from it before to-morrow !

## XLII.

His hope, while friends wept sorely for his loss,  
Dwelt not on that, but on his Saviour's cross.

## XLIII.

To-day, while it is called to-day,  
O harden not the heart !  
Walk in the good and narrow way,  
And choose the better part.  
  
There's not a soul that dwells in bliss,  
Nor one that bides in woe,  
But would unite to teach thee this :—  
Live, as believing so !

## XLIV.

We cannot reach an endless life,  
But through the gate of death :  
Good reader, strive not all thy strife  
For that which perisheth !

## XLV.

An honest man lies here ; but look not thou  
To other men's accounts : set right thine own,  
And make it what THE JUDGE may then allow,  
When all shall stand before the eternal throne.

## XLVI.

Who are the dead, that to the LORD  
Are truly said to die ?  
They who, when living, by HIS word  
Walk'd in sincerity.

They are the kingdom's rightful heirs ;  
Of them the Spirit saith,  
That rest from labour shall be theirs,  
And blessedness in death !

## XLVII.

LORD, who regards the power of Thy wrath?—  
Even thereafter as a man doth fear  
Is Thy displeasure!—Humble was the path,  
And seeming straight, of him that sleepeth here;  
Hope that the day of recompence may show,  
That in THY sight the truth was ever so!

## XLVIII.

What can fond eulogies avail the dead?  
Take for the living wholesome thought instead.  
Need'st thou repentance?—Then, both faith and reason  
Bid thee not wait for more convenient season:  
Seasons will come and go;—but where shalt thou  
Be found when they do come? Repent thee now!

## XLIX.

Ask not what thou canst not know  
Touching him that sleeps below:  
Seek thyself thy SAVIOUR'S praise,  
Walking humbly in HIS ways,  
And thou may'st securely come  
To a blessed final home.

## L.

Some may almost appear of God forsaken,  
So piteous is their lot; but not the less  
For that will they who live by faith be taken  
From this world's scorn to THAT world's blessedness!

## LI.

When Thou art angry, all our days are gone!  
LORD, may thy worse displeasure, against sin,  
Have been appeased through thy beloved SON,  
In his behalf who rests this grave within!

## LII.

Stranger, thou lookest on the grave of one  
Who lived as fearing God's almighty wrath,  
Yet trusted not in aught that he had done:—  
Thou canst not follow in a safer path.

## LIII.

Death brought the summons to which all must bow,  
And he hath enter'd on a world unseen :  
God only knoweth hearts ; remember thou,  
Men's works do follow, as their life hath been !

## LIV.

" Absent from body, present with the LORD ;"—  
How can it be, except that souls survive,  
Each in its place, till HIS almighty word  
Shall bid their bodies rise, re-join, and live ?  
Grant, LORD, that this departed soul may stay  
Where shines Thy presence, till that awful day !

## LV.

He came to rest among his kindred here,  
Where parents, children, partners, slept before :  
So nature bids ; and would that in wise fear  
Herein we listen'd rightly to her lore !  
What boots to any where the body lies,  
Unless their souls re-join in Paradise ?

## LVI.

A rest before our final home—  
A middle state! and is it come?  
Think, sinner, of their hopeless sighs  
Who fail to wake in Paradise!

## LVII.

CHRIST spake the word, and back the spirit came  
To her that had been dead :—and HE shall say,  
Who is through all eternity the same,  
“ Arise,” to all the dead at the great day.  
LORD, grant our spirits may be summon'd so  
To come again from bliss, and not from woe!

## LVIII.

The disembodied spirits of the dead  
Know more of thee, perhaps, than thou canst tell;  
Stand then in awe, lest they should see thee tread  
In any evil way that leads to hell:  
For be they gone to blessedness or wrath,  
All now alike would warn thee from that path.

## LIX.

Hopefully, earth to earth, and dust to dust,  
We did commit his body to the ground :  
Heaven grant that, with the spirits of the just,  
His soul may now in Paradise be found !

## LX.

“ God of the living only, not the dead ;”—  
How shall we live until our bodies rise ?  
’Tis our souls die not ;—whither have they fled ?  
Those of the faithful are in Paradise.

## LXI.

How is it that the instruments of earth,  
Which kill the body, cannot kill the soul ?  
Think, Christian, of thy soul’s immortal birth,  
And seek to CHRIST for grace to make it whole.

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## LXII.

Aged limbs are here at rest,  
Long with strength to labour blest ;  
Long, by feebleness and pain,  
Taught that all below is vain.  
But a hope of rest above,  
And the faith that God is love,  
Brought the sufferer thoughts of peace,  
Till he found a glad release.

## LXIII.

Born to a lot of persevering toil,  
He watch'd withal, and trimm'd his lamp with oil,  
Making, with faith and prayer, the better choice :—  
O joy, when such shall hear the BRIDEGROOM'S voice !

## LXIV.

A thousand such as he, have lived and died  
In humble noiseless faith ; unletter'd men,  
Content in lots of duteous toil to bide,  
Sustain'd by hope that all shall rise again.  
Good reader, scorn not such !—When time is past,  
There shall be many first, who now are last.

## LXV.

Rest thee, humble child of toil !  
Thou hast doff'd thy mortal coil,  
After many a buffet borne  
From hard-heartedness and scorn !  
But thyself thou didst not fret—  
For thy hope on HIM was set,  
Who has power to give thee rest  
With the spirits of the blest !

## LXVI.

Faithful in gifts God gave him to possess,  
He lived a life of humble usefulness :  
What may we hope shall shape his future lot ?—  
That which he had—not that which he had not.

## LXVII.

CHRISTIAN, one of low degree  
Rests him here from life of labour ;  
One that fear'd his God was he—  
Kind and faithful to his neighbour.  
Keenly tried, with resignation  
Silently he kiss'd the rod :  
Deem not that his lowly station  
Made him poor in sight of God.

## LXVIII.

Cease to grieve for children taken  
Early from a life of pain :  
Ripest fruit is quickest shaken ;  
Death to them must needs be gain.

“ Suffer little ones to come  
(So our LORD hath said) to me :”  
Let repining voice be dumb ;  
Who can shelter them as HE ?

## LXIX.

Show us the estate or lot  
Whereto trial cometh not,  
And we will not bid thee cease  
Grieving for thy child's release.  
But a common grief is thine,  
And should Christian faith repine ?  
Thou art stricken, but no fears  
Are for him. Refrain thy tears !

## LXX.

Only child, of promise fair,  
Who hadst well thy course begun,  
Taught with all thy parents' care—  
Is thy race already run ?  
Hearts bereft would surely break,  
But that HE who strikes the blow  
Hath, for the Redeemer's sake,  
Balm in store for every woe !

## LXXI.

Early taken from the snares  
Of the world, and from its cares—  
Knowing where thy trust was set,  
Dare we for thy gain to fret,  
Counting only our own loss?—  
Praise to HIM that bore the cross,  
For that heavenly strength's supply,  
Which had fitted thee to die!

## LXXII.

We bore him sadly to the grave,  
Checking the tear that dimm'd our eyes  
With thought of HIM who came to save—  
“Young man, I say to thee, Arise!”  
LORD, when that awful voice shall sound,  
And all before Thy might shall bow,  
Grant that his lot may then be found,  
E'en as our humble hope is now!

## LXXIII.

And is he laid in this cold grave,  
Whom but as yesterday we saw  
In youthful glee so fresh and brave?  
LORD, let us mark thy ways with awe!  
Grant him thy mercy in *that* day,  
And teach ourselves to watch and pray!

## LXXIV.

Our life is as a post that hasteth by :—

Boast thee not of to-morrow ; here lies one,  
So seeming strong he scarce could fear to die ;  
Yet ere the morrow dawn'd, his course was run !

## LXXV.

Living *yesterday*, and well—  
And *to-day* hath heard his knell !  
Christian, guard thee from the sorrow  
Of relying on *to-morrow* !

## LXXVI.

At morning he was strong—the evening saw  
His wife a widow and his friends in tears,  
His children orphans ! Write it as thy law,  
“ He wisely lives who watches, prays, and fears.”

## LXXVII.

Long, weary sickness to the grave brought down  
The sufferer who in hope beneath was laid :  
How more than richly, with the heavenly crown,  
May this world's griefs, borne meekly, be repaid !

## LXXVIII.

We could not choose but mourn to see  
The pining of a comely form  
So lately buoyant with the glee  
Of life's full current fresh and warm—  
Now torn with fierce and racking pain,  
And wasting piecemeal day by day ;  
While we knew well that hope was vain,  
And that the foe would clutch his prey !  
LORD, how unsearchable art Thou !  
Thy footsteps often how unknown !  
But to Thy will we humbly bow,  
Assured that Thou art good alone.

## LXXIX.

A slow disease, incurable by art,  
He bore with meekness, under grievous pain ;  
Hope that before his Saviour said, Depart,  
Patience and faith had made his sufferings gain.

## LXXX.

A fearful accident, in youth and strength  
Cut short his life.—How well that a career  
Approvable of God lies not in length  
Of days, but in His holy faith and fear !  
Walk so—and, whether slow or sudden end  
Come late or early, CHRIST will be thy friend.

## LXXXI.

A sad calamity with stunning blow  
Destroy'd a precious life : to whom but Thee,  
FATHER, who hast a balm for every woe,  
Can sufferers turn for hope, on bended knee ?  
LORD, give us grace (Thou only canst) to prove  
Affliction a true sign of Thy deep love !

## LXXXII.

Sore travail prematurely quench'd the life  
Of an unconscious mother and dear wife ;  
In giving life, she lost it. Righteous LORD,  
With humbled hearts we bow to Thy award !

## LXXXIII.

Long seeming slow, yet sudden at the last—  
Think in what various ambush Death doth lurk,  
And wake thee, Christian, ere the day be past ;  
For the night cometh, in which none can work.

## LXXXIV.

So lately wedded, and so early taken !  
Yet, mourner, there is comfort for thy loss ;  
Neither in life or death are they forsaken,  
Who look to Him that died upon the cross.

## LXXXV.

Mourner, dost thou grudge to part  
With the idol of thine heart,  
And for present sorrow deem  
Calm content a vanish'd dream,  
As tho' CHRIST could make no more  
Life as precious as before ?  
Let not selfish grief benumb  
Thought of better things to come ;  
But mistrust thine own dim sight,  
Sure that God's decrees are right.  
Raise thy hope beyond the grave :  
He can cheer who died to save !

## LXXXVI.

So early snatch'd, while life was in its prime ;  
But had he faith in CHRIST, and trust in God ?  
True life consisteth not in length of time—  
Sorrow in hope, and kiss the chastening rod.

## LXXXVII.

Of sickly frame and feeble, slender share  
Of health or this world's pleasure was his lot :  
What boots it now, if hope were anchor'd there,  
Where heavenly pleasures are, and pain is not ?

## LXXXVIII.

Infirm in health, of worldly substance bare,  
Forlorn and piteous was his earthly fare :  
But is this life man's sole or proper home ?—  
No ; CHRIST is risen : life is yet to come !

## LXXXIX.

Christian, pause ! there sleeps below,  
One whom Heaven's severest blow  
Had deprived of moral sense—  
Of his reason's strong defence.  
Yet for him the pitying tear  
Is not needed. Rather fear  
For the lot that may be theirs  
Who are mad with worldly cares ;  
Or who quench the light within  
By the drunkard's fearful sin ;  
Into darkness turning day :—  
Sad, but wiser, go thy way !

## XC.

A patient husbandman, to labour strong,  
Here sleeps released from worldly toil and gain :  
Seed-time and harvest unto him had long  
Been thoughts familiar—Had they taught in vain ?  
Hope otherwise, and that through CHRIST he may  
Reap an enduring harvest in THAT DAY.

## XCI.

He sow'd his grain, and saw his seeds arise  
Each with its own new body ; and he read  
Their lore, and learnt the precious truth to prize—  
" So is the resurrection of the dead :"  
As one who look'd for life, may then his part  
Be found with them of honest and good heart !

## XCII.

By sore reverses in his worldly lot  
Led to exalt his care from things below  
To treasures which the moth corrupteth not,  
He found in resignation balm for woe.  
Give us, good LORD, the grace we need to see  
That our true comfort is in trusting THEE !

## XCIII.

Christian, the grave before thee doth inclose  
A pious mother and a faithful wife :  
What balm but His shall heal the mourner's woes,  
Who is the resurrection and the life ?  
LORD, give the sufferers hope amidst their pain,  
That their great loss is her exceeding gain !

## XCIV.

A tender mother and a virtuous wife  
Here sleeps in humble hope of better life,  
By side of him she loved and cherish'd well :  
Leave to the judgment-day the rest to tell.

## XCV.

Of mild and patient temper, she was tried  
Often by harshness, by perverseness oft ;  
And many a burst of wrath she turn'd aside,  
By her calm meekness, and an answer soft ;  
Her ways were ways of peace ; and she has found  
A rest, we hope, where peace and joy abound.

## XCVI.

Reader, the grave o'er which thou standest, hides  
A Christian servant : in that simple phrase  
How much of noblest human worth resides,  
They best can tell, who know life's crooked ways.  
Grant, LORD, he may hereafter taste a joy  
Wherein to faithful hearts is no alloy !

## XCVII.

Rest, valued servant, rest in hope ! We knew  
Thy solid worth, thy imperfections too,  
But not thy trials.—Well does it befall  
That HE who shall requite thee knoweth all.

## XCVIII.

One who chose the better part—  
Humble, answering not again,  
Doing service from the heart,  
As to CHRIST, and not to men :  
  
Faithful servant from thy youth,  
To thy sorrowing earthly lord,  
May the JUDGE who knoweth truth,  
Deem thee fit for His reward !

## XCIX.

" A serviceable, faithful, honest friend,  
With gifts and faculties of sense " above  
His worldly level, here has found an end  
In hope fast anchor'd on redeeming love.

## C.

He served with faithfulness in humble sphere,  
As one who could his talent well employ ;  
Hope that when CHRIST, the LORD, shall re-appear,  
He may be bidden to his MASTER's joy !

## CI.

Religious, honest, striving to be just,  
Yet leaning not on any worldly trust,  
This was his great prevailing thought within—  
LORD, be thou merciful to all my sin !

## CII.

When the ear heard, it blest him ; and the eye  
That saw him, gave him witness.—Surely they,  
Who love their brother thus, must needs descry  
And find, in Christian faith, the narrow way !

## CIII.

“ When saw we Thee an hungred, LORD ? or when  
Naked, and brought Thee succour—could it be ? ”—  
“ When so ye did to poorer brethren, then  
Ye did whate’er was done in faith, to ME.”  
Thus did our brother : hope that he may stand,  
In the great day upon his LORD’s right hand.

## CIV.

Father, and mother too, forsook—  
For whom has death been known to spare ?  
But ONE above the orphan took  
To more than earthly father’s care.  
And stedfastly he sought to prove,  
By walking straight in duty’s way,  
His thankfulness for such high love :—  
LORD, grant him mercy in THAT DAY !

## CV.

There is laid this grave within,  
One who had been slave of sin ;  
But he died with contrite sense  
Of his manifold offence,  
And in trembling penitence.

CHRISTIAN, if whilst thou dost read  
Of his extremity of need,  
Pity shall stir a hopeful thought  
Of the salvation CHRIST hath wrought,  
Let it not blind thee to His *law*,  
But commune with thyself in awe.  
Leave judgment unto HIM alone,  
To whom all hidden things are known ;  
And strive, whilst surely not too late,  
Thyself to find the narrow gate.

## CVI.

Less liked than honour'd in his ways,  
In duty's rigid path he trod :  
Blest, if in room of fleeting praise,  
He find th' approval of his God !

## CVII.

Judge none before the time : strange compound he  
That sleepeth here, of trembling piety  
And uncorrected frailty ! Look within,  
And watch the deep deceitfulness of sin !

## CVIII.

He knew not letters ; but, in faith employ'd,  
God's house and Sabbaths had supplied the void :  
Do men of their own wisdom vain possess  
As fair a hope of tasting blessedness ?

## CIX.

A Christian man, who loved the house of prayer,  
And at CHRIST's table was a constant guest :  
Hope humbly, seeing that his heart was there,  
That he hath found his treasure with the blest.

## CX.

Rest thee, aged, humble man,  
From a journey that hath been  
Unto thee a chequer'd span,  
Cloudy now, and now serene !  
But alike in shade and light,  
With a faith unfeign'd and whole,  
Thou didst keep THE END in sight ;  
CHRIST have mercy on thy soul !

## CXI.

E'en from his cradle, healthful play of limb,  
With strength to labour, was unknown to him ;  
And death perforce with welcome summons came  
To one of patient mind and sickly frame.  
LORD, may his trial in the judgment prove  
That earthly trials were but signs of love !

## CXII.

Of lively frame and of a genial soul,  
He yet believed in CHRIST with all the heart :  
Hope that an earnest faith had made him whole,  
Ere came his early summons to depart.  
To be the slave of mirthfulness is sin ;  
A merry heart is healthful medicine.

## CXIII.

In the world's busy mart, amidst the snares  
Of merchandise was cast his earthly lot ;  
Yet came not evil on him unawares,  
For he had "bought the truth and sold it not."

## CXIV.

A man of enterprise, and active mind,  
One who had seen the ways of many lands,  
Here rests awhile upon his way to find  
A home that shall endure, not made with hands.

His comfort was, that one who knows the heart  
Shall be his Judge : for he, in many a snare,  
Sought earnestly to choose the better part,  
And in all perils cast on GOD his care.

## CXV.

He that here slumbers in the grave's last sleep,  
Was one who saw thy wonders in the deep :  
In mercy waft him, LORD, from life's rough sea  
Unto the haven where we all would be !

## CXVI.

Soldier, rest—thy warfare ended !  
If thou hadst a Christian's trust,  
Fear not ; HE, whose love commended  
The Centurion's faith, is just.

Past are now thy risks of falling ;  
Death from these hath brought release :  
For thy works, and not thy calling,  
CHRIST will judge thee. Rest in peace !

## CXVII.

Beneath this turf a skill'd mechanic lies,  
Industrious, honest, and of faithful mind :  
Heaven grant that he, through CHRIST, above the skies,  
In house not made with hands, a home may find !

## CXVIII.

A man of Christian mind, whose calling lay  
Amidst the garden's flower-enamell'd sod :  
Hope that his root of faith, through suffering, may  
Bear fruit within the paradise of God !

## CXIX.

Judge no man from his calling : one is laid  
Below, whose ways bespoke a Christian mind ;  
Kept safe from snares of an unpitying trade,  
With hand as generous as his heart was kind.

Men censure outward blemish, and allow  
The hidden sin, in judgment blind and hard ;  
Thou, LORD, alone art merciful,—for Thou  
Dost each according to his work regard !

## CXX.

CHRISTIAN, who shalt here be brought  
Man's mortality to scan—  
Breathe a prayer, in silent thought  
Of the hidden life of man ;

“Cleanse our hearts so cold and dead,  
LORD, from all malignant leaven ;  
Give us evermore the bread  
That sustaineth life for heaven !”

## CXXI.

Call not the grave disconsolate and cold,  
Whose friendly voice would bid thee flee from sin :  
Seek garments for thyself that wax not old,  
That with the bridegroom thou may'st enter in !

## CXXII.

Strong foundations he had laid  
With the stones that turn to dust,  
Unto others lending aid :  
Hope that, by a faithful trust,  
He had wisely laid his own  
On the living Corner-stone.

## CXXIII.

A simple Christian man, without disguise,  
Whose word was that of one who hated lies ;  
Albeit in art it was his skill and pride,  
To make the surface fair, and flaws to hide :  
Joy where in this world's jealous strife and din,  
An honest calling proves no snare of sin !

## CXXIV.

Toiling, aye, in hurried round,  
Slave of others' toil or pleasure,—  
How, in such, can oft be found  
Stedfast thought of heavenly treasure ?

Yet was he who sleeps below,  
One of grave and sober mind ;  
And, though rude in outward show,  
Thoughtfully to good inclined :  
Hope that he is now at rest,  
With the spirits of the blest !

## CXXV.

Here rests a man who was, in his degree,  
What humbler servants of the Church should be ;  
Reverent at heart, and pious—sober, grave ;—  
Trust that he sleeps in HIM who died to save !

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## CXXVI.

If, Christian, while thou read'st of one so soon  
Cut off, where life had scarcely pass'd its noon—  
A watchful mother and a faithful wife,  
Withdrawn from all the usefulness of life—  
A sigh should burst, "bethink thee what and where  
Thou art—a sinner in a life of care!"  
Leave her to CHRIST, and thy frail self explore,  
As though the Judge e'en now were at the door.

## CXXVII.

Sad sufferings were hers ; disease, and pain,  
And loss of friends—a melancholy train  
Of griefs, to lead into the heavenward way !  
Yet, deem her not forsaken : blest are they  
Who wisely all such signs of love employ,  
And through much sorrow enter into joy.

## CXXVIII.

Here rests a man who loved the house of prayer,  
And loved his SAVIOUR's holy feast to share ;  
Was to his neighbours faithful, kind to all,  
And ever ready at compassion's call :—  
But CHRIST alone is Judge ; in Him we trust,  
Who is all-wise, and merciful as just.

## CXXIX.

A poor and humble worker of the soil,  
Through more than a long life's allotted span,  
Pursued in calm content a life of toil,  
Serving in quiet ways both God and man :  
Heaven grant such lengthen'd day of proof may be  
The presage of a blest eternity !

## CXXX.

When lines of death were in his face  
We found him in the house of prayer,  
And at CHRIST's table seeking grace :—  
Sure it was faith that led him there !  
Yet not on that, but on the love  
And death of CHRIST alone we rest  
Our hope, that to the joys above  
He may find entrance with the blest.

## CXXXI.

Ah, little think the gay and giddy crowd,  
What hearts are breaking on this dreary earth,  
What widows' tears and orphans' sobbings loud,  
Burst forth while they are busy with their mirth !  
LORD, thou hast stricken sorely ! But we praise  
Thy name, that he, whom thou hast call'd, was one  
Who strove to rule his household in thy ways,  
And loved thy holy house. THY will be done !

## CXXXII.

Truth to them is little known,  
Who by rank would measure worth :  
One rests here whose works outshone  
Mere nobility of birth.

Virtuous maiden, servant, wife—  
Faithful, diligent, and kind,  
Through each stage of active life,  
On she pass'd with Christian mind :  
JUDGE of all, we humbly trust  
Thou wilt place her with the just !

## CXXXIII.

Of comely countenance, and mind serene,  
She lived the flower of a sequester'd scene,  
And died in humble faith. Her soul, we trust,  
Dwells happy, while its body sleeps in dust.

## CXXXIV.

A blithe and active maiden, frank and kind,  
But modest, chaste, and of a virtuous mind,—  
We needs must sigh for one so soon remov'd  
From faithful service, and from friends she lov'd !  
But do we *wisely* mourn when such depart,  
Knowing that "blessed are the pure in heart?"

## CXXXV.

ONE who hath loved us dearly, bade us seek  
The narrow way that leadeth unto life :  
'Tis not for mortals, blind and fond, to speak  
Proudly ; but so, we trust, did that good wife,  
And watchful mother, whose remains rest here ;  
For much she seem'd to mark God's holy will.  
CHRISTIAN, who readest this, be wise, and fear  
Lest thou refuse the good, and choose the ill !

## CXXXVI.

A plain, blunt man,—of disposition kind,  
And civil ways, though shy and unrefined ;  
An upright master, and his kinsmen's friend,  
And as a neighbour cautious to offend ;  
A lover of his Church, and constant guest  
At his Redeemer's table,—here has rest :  
His sorrowing partner dedicates this stone,  
Trusting her reverent hope to CHRIST alone.

## CXXXVII.

Humbly he sought the house of praise and prayer,  
Tho' deeply quench'd in him all hearing sense ;  
Hope that the patient mind which led him there  
Bespoke a faith his LORD may recompense !

## CXXXVIII.

He came to fourscore years, and truly found  
'Twas labour all, and sorrow ! With sharp pains  
His aged limbs were bended to the ground,  
And chill'd was the warm current of his veins ;  
Yet his trust falter'd not ; for he was one  
Who sought God's house until his strength did cease,  
And pray'd for blessing.—Hope that, in His Son,  
God hath vouchsafed him to depart in peace !

## CXXXIX.

Men harshly counted him a drudge :—in sooth,  
Few had a lot more rugged and uncouth ;  
For all life long, through toil of roughest kind,  
He labour'd on with persevering mind,  
Believing it God's will : and was not he,  
Compared with slaves of mammon, nobly free ?  
Seek not thy good things all in this low scene ;  
Thou knowest whom a gulf is fix'd between !

## CXL.

A simple art of healing was her pride,  
And she was ever ready to befriend :  
Hope that her works of mercy may abide,  
Through CHRIST, where needs of healing are at end.

## CXLI.

Long from the joyousness of sight  
Shut out, a mercy all-Divine  
Vouchsafed a ray of inward light,  
Upon her lowly path to shine.  
Hence, led by faith, with patient mind,  
She journey'd to an end serene ;  
As one who sought in time to find  
A joy that eye hath never seen.

## CXLII.

A busy mother, press'd with household care,  
Her piety to some might seem but cold ;  
Yet was her trust in CHRIST—and who shall dare  
Deny to such the shelter of His fold ?  
Boast not thy *faith* ; lest when the race is run,  
Five cities should be hers, when thou hast none !

## CXLIII.

This the memorial she has left behind :—  
A faithful wife, a neighbour good and kind ;  
Who, with an open hand to meet distress,  
Could never eat the bread of idleness ;  
Content and cheerful, and of this fair fruit  
A humble Christian spirit was the root.

## CXLIV.

“ Eat not the bread of other men for nought,”—  
So Scripture bids, and he that sleeps below,  
Believing, in that noble spirit wrought  
Through hardships which the wealthy cannot know.  
But Christian faith gave courage, and he strove  
For those around him, till his toils were blest ;  
And now, in hope, set firmly on the love  
Of HIM that died for us, he is at rest.

## CXLV.

A single-hearted man, of native sense,  
Who feared his Maker, and disdain'd pretence ;  
In whom, beneath a rough outside was found  
Rich sterling value, for the heart was sound :—  
Scorn not the kernel for a shell uncouth :  
The world loves pliancy, but God loves truth.

## CXLVI.

A shrewd, sagacious man, of active thought,  
Whom, living, neighbours much for counsel sought :  
Take his advice in death, from holy ground—  
“ Seek ye the LORD, while yet He may be found !”

## CXLVII.

Reft soon of dearest earthly prop and friend ;  
And left with rugged hardships to contend,  
This was her beacon-light in dark distress—  
That “ God is father of the fatherless.”

And so she found it, and withal, that He  
Defends the widow’s cause ; and thus made free  
From cares, with which no might but His can cope,  
She lived contentedly, and died in hope.

## CXLVIII.

Of disposition shy, yet faithful, just,  
And diligent in humble sphere of trust,  
She ruled her quiet, lonely ways with care :—  
Would all might fall asleep with hope as fair !

## CXLIX.

None sorrow’d at his death ; for he had grown  
To all a burthen, and a help to none ;  
Yet Thou, LORD, still didst bear with him ! We praise  
Thy name, that not as ours are THY just ways.

## CL.

None live too long, whom GOD doth spare : yet fain  
Would many die, by choice, ere death arrive ;  
As they, who in decrepitude and pain,  
And widow'd, all familiar friends survive,  
Grown wonders unto many !—Such was he,  
Who sleeps below ; but CHRIST had sent him grace  
To count his trials mercy ; and now free,  
His ransom'd soul is gone to its own place.

## L'ENVOY.

The lays are ended. Reader, it remains  
For thee in faith and charity to pray,  
That he, who writes these monitory strains,  
May not himself be found a cast-away !

## Specific Epitaphs.

	PAGE
Labouring Classes and Poor . . . . .	119, 120
Children . . . . .	121
Early Deaths . . . . .	122
Sudden . . . . .	123
Lingering . . . . .	124
Accidental or Premature . . . . .	125
Widowhood . . . . .	126
Sickly—Poor—Insane . . . . .	127
Husbandmen—Broken fortunes . . . . .	128
Wives and Mothers . . . . .	129
Servants, &c. . . . .	130, 131
Miscellaneous . . . . .	132—135
Sundry worldly callings . . . . .	136—140

THREE CHAPTERS  
ON  
*The Intermediate State.*







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